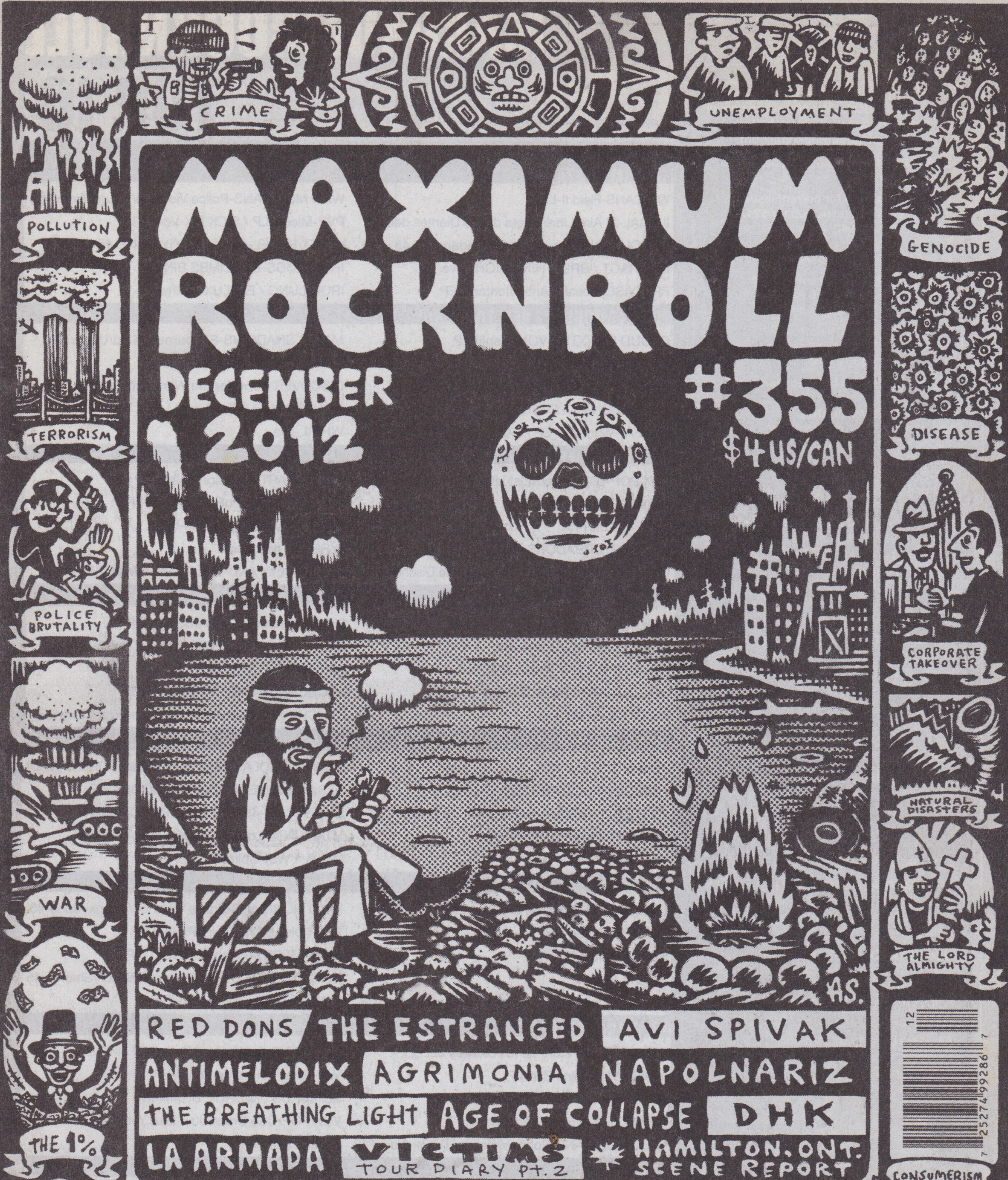
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

DECEMBER 2012

#355

$4 US/CAN



RED DONS · THE ESTRANGED · AVI SPIVAK

ANTIMELODIX · AGRIMONIA · NAPOLNARIZ

THE BREATHING LIGHT · AGE OF COLLAPSE · DHK

LA ARMADA · VICTIMS TOUR DIARY PT. 2 · HAMILTON, ONT. SCENE REPORT

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

For what it's worth, here are some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

MARIAM BASTANI

- WICCANS-Field II-LP
- ILEGAL-El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del...LP
- NAPOLNARIZ-Esperandote/Olvidandote-45
- DISTRACT / BREATHING LIGHT-live
- FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
- WILD MOHICANS-Police Violence/ Drunk Alone-45
- PVP-Miedo-LP / SICK FIX-Vexed-LP
- ASPEX/KRUEL-split flexi / HYGIENE-45
- IRON DOGS-LP / LIMBS BIN-EP
- IRON LUNG / EFFLUXUS-live

WILL BLOMQUIST – NEW TOP TEN!!!

- CLOUD RAT/XTRA VOMIT-split LP
- KOWARD-Overbred-EP
- PICTURE FRAME SEDUCTION-LP
- EXTORTION/COLD WORLD-split LP
- DEFEAT-Warbride-EP / GOFILTHGO-EP
- MAGIC SHADOWS-Sunburned Mind/Under...45
- V/A-Turist I Tillvaron Vol. 4-LP
- DISCOVER-Food for the Warmachine-EP
- MEURTHE/VEUVE SS-split LP
- WHIRL-live

MITCH CARDWELL

- VOX POP-Cab Driver/Just Like Your Mom-45
- MENACE-G.L.C.-EP
- LIVEFASTDIE-45
- ELS MASTURBADORS MONGÓLICS-LP
- PUFFY AREOLAS-1982: Dishonorable Discharge-LP
- PROTOMARTYR-Colpi Proibiti-EP
- URBAN WASTE-Police Brutality-EP
- KIM FOWLEY-Outrageous-LP
- LYRES-all reissues
- ROY LONELY AND THE PHANTOM MOVERS-live

ROBERT COLLINS

- FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
- IRON LUNG / GEHENNA-live
- THE NEW FLESH / RANK XEROX-live
- MÜLLTÜTE-EP / SICKOIDS-live
- WICCANS-Field II-LP
- SICK FIX-Vexed-LP / LIMBS BIN-EP
- ILEGAL-LP / GOFILTHGO-5 Tracks Noise-EP
- ASPEX/KRUEL-split flexi
- ARCTIC FLOWERS-Procession-12"
- CRUCIAL SECTION-Standing on the Front Line-LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- WEIRD TV-TKM-12"
- HOMOSTUPIDS-New York Jammin'-EP
- ESCROTO DE RATA-Neber Main de Bollos-LP
- HYGIENE-Hygiene/Hygéne-45
- WICCANS-Field II-LP
- PUFFY AREOLAS-1982: Dishonorable Discharge-LP
- ELS MASTURBADORS MONGÓLICS-LP
- SURGEONS-45 / GOLDEN PELICANS-45
- UTAH JAZZ-Lookin' like Howwywood-EP
- V/A-A 4 Way Split-EP

DAN GOETZ

- URBAN WASTE-Police Brutality-EP
- SICK FIX-Vexed-LP
- SCHOOL JERKS-LP
- SNAKE RUN-LP
- ILEGAL-El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del...LP
- WILD MOHICANS-Police Violence/ Drunk Alone-45
- PROTOMARTYR-Colpi Proibiti-EP
- NIGHT BIRDS-Fresh Kills Vol.1-LP
- NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-Ocean Beach/Shark...-45
- NONES-Shake Your Brain-EP

GREG HARVESTER

- ILEGAL-El Aire Libre de los Dientes del...LP
- MÜLLTÜTE-Keine Zeit-EP
- ADELITAS-Llama Viva del la Rabia-LP
- ARCTIC FLOWERS-Procession-12"
- WILD MOHICANS-Police Violence/ Drunk Alone-45
- RED DONS-Ausländer/Mauvaise Foi-45
- V/A-Turist I Tillvaron Vol. 4-LP
- EFFLUXUS / MIDNITE BRAIN-live
- VOX POP-Cab Driver/Just Like Your Mom-45
- SNAKE RUN-LP

KENNY KAOS

- FIRST TIMES-Runnin' Around-EP
- MANNEQUIN MEN/ROOFTOP VIGILANTES-split EP
- NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-Ocean Beach/Shark...-45
- ANTI-SOCIALES-Las Menos Macabras de las...LP
- LITTLE SEIZURES-Can't Take it No More-EP
- LADY BANANA-Adult Rock-EP
- SEDATIVES-Teenage Runaway/Fascists-45
- THE BEST-45 / MEDICAL TOURISTS-LP
- VOX POP-Cab Driver/Just Like Your Mom-45
- MISSING MONUMENTS-(I'm Gonna) Love you...-EP

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See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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1/6 page: (2.5" x 5") $33
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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

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KING SALAMI AND THE CUMBERLAND THREE-CD
NONES-Shake Your Brain-EP
LIMIÑANAS-Crystal Anis-LP
NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-Ocean Beach/Shark...-45
LITTLE SEIZURES-Can't Take it No More-EP
CINDY SISTERS-45 / LYRES-all reissues
THE GREEN TELESCOPE-Two by Two-EP
HYGIENE-Hygiene/Hygéne-45
BRAT FARRAR-CD

SAM LEFEBVRE

On Tour making Shit Happen

RAY LUJAN

THE BLOODTYPES-Just Your Type-CD
THE FLASHLIGHTS-I'm Not Alone-LP
JELLO BIAFRA AND THE GSM-Shock-u-py-CD
LECHEROUS GAZE-Bagagazo-EP
MEDICAL TOURISTS-LP
MUHAMMAD ALI-LP
NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS-Ocean Beach/Shark...-45
NHL95-Songs for the Decline of you and me-LP
NO///SE-LP
THE MOB / HOT WATER MUSIC-live

KEVIN MANION

WICCANS-Field II-LP
RED DONS-Ausländer/Mauvaise Foi-45
ARCTIC FLOWERS-Procession-12"
FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
HOMOSTUPIDS-New York Jammin'-EP
ATTACK SS-No Nukes!!-EP
KOWARD-Overbred-EP
PEROXIDE-Can You Hear the Sound of Peace?-EP
PVP-Miedo-LP
SYNTHETIC ID / RANK/XEROX-live

LYDIA PHELPS

ILEGAL-El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes...-LP
FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
MÜLLTÜTE-Keine Zeit-EP
URBAN WASTE-Police Brutality-EP
SETIEMBREONCE / SIN ORDEN–split EP
GOFILTHGO–5 Tracks Noise-EP
ELS MASTURBADORS MONGÓLICS-LP
WASTED-The Early Years EP's 1998-2002-LP
PROTOMARTYR-Colpi Proibiti-EP
SNAKE RUN-LP / RED DONS-45

FRED SCHRUNK

WEIRD TV-TKM-12"
ARCTIC FLOWERS-Procession-12"
RED DONS-Ausländer/Mauvaise Foi-45
MARGY PEPPER-Golden Webs-LP
VOX POP-Cab Driver/Just Like Your Mom-45
MUHAMMAD ALI-LP
ILEGAL-El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del...LP
ADELITAS-Llama Viva del la Rabia-LP
FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
SCHOOL JERKS-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

ILEGAL-El Aire Libre de los Dientes del...LP
HYGIENE-Hygiene/Hygéne-45
SCHOOL JERKS-LP
WICCANS-Field II-LP
ANGER BURNING-When-LP
DEFORMITY-Shards-EP
HEAVY NUKES-Fucked up for Life-EP
MÜLLTÜTE-Keine Zeit-EP
FRACASO-Desafio Antiautoritario-EP
KOWARD-Overbred-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

General Speech Omnibus#1
Artcore #30
Shit your Pants and do the Death Dance #3
Toothworm #5
Ajatuksen Valo #2
Lots of Rot #2
Nothing Matress
Trust #155, #156
Toinen Vaihtoehto #241
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#186/November '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/February '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Mauraders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/March '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/August '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/October '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/November '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/March '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/August '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/September '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/October '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/November '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/December '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/February '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/March '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/August '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/September '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/October '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/November '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/December '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/January '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/February '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen & Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Gluda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston & Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, & more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Ploggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/ Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans & Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Philippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, Hpp, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.:'80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cokskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise Records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History pt 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Unlearn, Deaf Club Oral History, Final part of the Czech Punk History.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R, Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor. Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIs, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Bloodkrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary Part 1, Means to an End Fest Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matress Zine.

#345/Febuary '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report pt 2, The Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Barchen Und Die Milchbubis, Who Killed Spikey Jacket, Kromosom tour of Japan, Globsters, Night Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester zine, Iron Hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#348/May '12. Seein' Red, Disorder, Lebakko, Da vs. Wax Idols, Anitmob, Leprosy, Acid Baby Jesus, Crimson Scarlet, Nasa Space Universe, Apache Dropout, Konton Crasher, Negazione, Defy.

#349/June '12. Omegas Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Only Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scece Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyle, Chris Boarts Larsen, Maria da Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's worst & best, the Tim Yo covers & the story behind Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Jyan y Diego, Banran.

#352/September '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/ Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Punk Underground in Peru, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volume, O Inimigo, The Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Disty Part II, Girth records.

foreign distros

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Miriam or whoever—

I see you chose not to print my last column (November) for *MRR*. As editor, it's your right, of course. I only wish you would have told me about it first... and explained your reasons to the readers.

Without explanation, it looks like it was my fault... flaking on a deadline or something. I think the readers have a right to know the reason for your decision, though I'm not disputing your right to do it.

—Mykel

Hi Mykel—

Sorry for the delay. Print week is next week and we are furiously editing over here... Also, are you not submitting a column for this month?

As for your rejected column, I apologize that we were not clear about not running your column. In the three years I have been here, we have never refused to print your column, but we regularly reject content. In one of your previous columns about child molesting (one of the many over the years), we forwarded you the letters that we received in complaint. We requested you respond to them in the letters section, but you instead "answered" to several letters at once with a few lines at the end of your next column.

As content coordinators, we have to answer for the content in the magazine and we cannot answer for the last column you submitted. Based on the 150+ shitworkers here, many of whom are people who have survived sexual assault and several of which who have survivors of politically motivated torture in their family, we can't defend that column. Based on the readers and contributors, some of which you make disparaging remarks against, we cannot defend the column.

The point here is not that we are "saving the punk world from this terrible column" or that we are "cry babies." We would never censor anyone nor would we butcher your writing. While your contributions to MRR*, far before I was even born, are valued here, having to defend a "guy who thinks this is the '80s is played out" (I'm paraphrasing a couple shitworkers, but I think you understand the humor and sentiment of young punks!). To the date of this letter the only people who have complained about your column not being printed are people that admit they do not read* MRR*—Whether they are punks or not, I don't know, but will say that frankly we care less about what non-punks think about what we punks are doing. I don't think many of the punks who read this give a shit about people who are not invested in punk telling us what "punk is supposed to be." The emotional cries of these non-*MRR *reading letter writers about "MMR" being "PC" and how upset they are about censorship seem to be very heartfelt and disruptive to the lives of these people. They are taking this all very personally. Hopefully they will start listening to some Svart Framtid, haha! No, but seriously, I appreciate their passion (even to the point of being abusive and rude) and I hope they apply this fervor to every aspect of their lives.*

I understand your primary concern about your image, but I don't think that your loyal readers will think you are lazy or that you "flaked" on your column. I'm sorry if your feelings were hurt because we didn't run your column and you feel that you may have looked bad because MRR *didn't run it. But, on the other hand, please think about the 150+ shitworkers who would be called to defend it (because that is the reality) when they could not. I can safely say that every punk involved with* MRR *would not shy away from a discussion, but as coordinators, we have to think of them too.*

We would never want to hurt your reputation as a writer, but in the end, editors have to make some tough decisions and this was one of them. I also believe since you have such a wide fan base, they will probably revel in the decision that we have made. It may even propel you into even more fame. We are friends Mykel, and everyone knows how much you love the spotlight at any cost. You are a famous guy because of it. Your voice is heard far and wide and I am glad that you use artistic expression to the fullest, even if it is pitting victim against victim and speaking against those who have little if no voice at all. Unlucky bastards whom we can laugh at because we're button-pushing punks? Not everyone would agree on that and we see this debate everyday within the pages of this magazine.

I respect your artistic integrity and creative spirit that makes nothing off limits. Your synergy of political content (though very loose in theory) and personal opinion is what makes your style yours. I expect we will get more complaint letters, particularly because you took the time and effort to reach out to your friends to contact "MMR" in protest of your perceived censorship. We are ok with that, because we can defend our decision not to print rejected content. Nothing personal.

Let me know about your current column and we hope to see you in the coming month for the holidays!

Thanks,

—Mariam and Lydia

Dear Mariam—

I know you're busy, so if it takes awhile to reply, I understand. I just wanted to answer a few points.

RE: responding in the letters section.

I answer in the column rather than the letters section because I believe the letters section should be the voice of the reader. If the writer always gets the last word it's unfair to the reader. It's like a baseball team that always gets to bat in the bottom of the 9th. If the letter-writer if s/he prefers to have an answer with the letter, I'll be glad to answer in the letters column.

"As content coordinators, we have to answer for the content in the magazine and we cannot answer for the last column you submitted. Based on the 150+ shitworkers here, many of whom are people who have survived sexual assault and several of which who have survivors of politically motivated torture in their family, we can't defend that column. Based on the readers and contributors, some of which you make disparaging remarks against, we cannot defend the column."

That's (the above) what you should have printed in place of my column. Just not running it... with no comments on your part... was a bit cowardly. It was avoiding dealing with the problem, by pretending it wasn't there. You did catch my lame excuse of "fans believing I was missing a deadline." Yeah, that was bullshit. I just didn't want to say that I thought you took the wimpy way out. My email itself was wimpy. I'm sorry.

RE: my call for emailing *MRR* on my blog.

Yeah, I thought my call for email would bring some response. Sorry if that response was abusive. It's weird that people take it all personally... no it isn't. As I wrote before, Americans have a lot to learn from Africans... Gambians in particular. People can disagree on ideas and still be friends. They do in Africa. You can be passionate about an idea without hating those with different ideas. Just like music. I LOVE Anti-Everything and World War IX. *MRR* reviewers hated them. That's where it stops. It doesn't affect my feelings toward the reviewers. Like I said, I understand why you made your decision, I just wish you would have said something in the issue instead of pretending it didn't exist.

Thanks for your respect. And for your note about *MMR vs MRR*. Dyslexia will be my downfall... or a stroke... or NYU construction in my neighborhood. Give my love to everyone who deserves it, and my disdain to the rest.

—Mykel

Dear MRR—

This is in regards to a column written by Mykel Board, which MMR censored by not printing in the last issue. Read

it here and make your own opinion mykelsblog.blogspot.ca

Its reasons like this I stopped reading Maximum Rock n Roll about a year ago. Mykel's columns were one of the few parts of *MMR* I looked forward to. They are funny, clever and well written. Who says it has to be PC? Just run the damn thing! Yes, it's offensive to some but who gives a shit? *MRR* has adopted a much too serious, holier than thou, let's not hurt anyone's feelings attitude. Which to me, is the least punk thing you could do. I thought punk was about pushing the envelope and expressing different opinions, right or wrong. Not about being a bunch of overly conscious, self righteous, censoring, cry baby hippies.

There is a time for serious discussion but that's not the only way to talk things out. Why not let him do it his way, and when he picks a fucked up topic that makes people uncomfortable, run it anyway. Then everyone can bicker over it in the letters and cry about how hurt everyone's feeling are, and how wrong it is that he should have such terrible ideas about women, and abuse blah, blah, blah. I think you guys missed the point. This column could have meant different things to different people. Stirring up conversation with controversy makes good writing, especially in a punk mag that is supposed to be filled with different opinions.

Let's have a laugh here and there for fucks sake! Not everyone has to be on the same page all the time, but I though you guys at least understood free speech, and I'll give you credit for running some of Mykel's previously fucked up stuff, but to not run this column? Why the fuck not? and Who gives a shit?

Shame on *MMR* for copping out and not running the article. Maybe someday I'll be able to read *MMR* again, but until everyone lightens up and stops with all the bummer trips I'll just stay clear. Thanks for nothing.

—matt ellis

I decided to leave all the typos and grammatical mistakes here for people to see what population we are dealing with. Am I being a classist? Perhaps, but WTF, let's have a fucking laugh here at someone's expense. What's the big deal, bro? To answer your question, "and Who gives a shit?" Apparently four people who don't read MRR *(not* MMR.*) No, but seriously, I am so sorry that we have lost you as a reader. I invite you to become involved again! If you would like to send us a scene report of your living room, please make sure to send us Hi res photos of your mom's basement. One Love, dog.*

—Mariam

[redacted] *Dear MRR—*

"This was one of the most insightful columns you've ever written. For that reason, I'm not surprised *MRR* didn't print it. People really don't like it when you piss them off by showing them that they've been wrong, that their reasoning has been fallacious, or when you show them that they no longer have any justifiable reason to feel any sorrier for themselves as anyone else.

The decision to not print this fucking disgusts me. Unless they change their mind, I won't support *MRR* in any fucking way. I thought it was a punk magazine."

—my original comment on Mykel's Other Blog

Those that made this decision should critically think about it. Don't turn your magazine into a complete piece of shit.

Mariam, You have my permission to print it in the letters section, and I would be interested in reading any responses to it, some of which I hope would be valid arguments. I'd venture to guess that the column is being misinterpreted, and I love constructive argumentation.

Although I wrote "I won't support *MRR* in any fucking way," I am well aware that I am supporting it by taking the time to voice my anger and disappointment at this decision in hopes that it will change people's minds and, possibly, make the magazine better if the decision is reversed.

Sincerely,

—Michael

PS An addendum that you may also print: The worst thing you can do if you disagree with someone's opinions, judgments, beliefs, etc., as long as they are based on real arguments, is dismiss them. This column should be printed, if for no other reason, to allow the readers the opportunity to argue against the claims Mykel is making in it, none of which I think violate *MRR*'s policies. I would appreciate it if anyone who replies to this letter do so in the letters section as well as on Mykel's Other Blog if possible.

I appreciate your letter of rage, even if you don't read MRR *and even if this is a response to Mykel's blog calling to email* MRR. *But, if you really think that making the magazine better takes the printing of a column that only four people who admittedly do not read this magazine were "outraged" by, then you really have no idea what it takes to make this zine better. Ask the hundreds of shitworkers, contributors and readers invested in this magazine, then we can talk... Otherwise, fuck off (and sell your dusty old punk records to me).*

—Mariam

[redacted] *Hello—*

I am sorry you chose not to print Mykel's column 354. You might have had some really interesting dialogue from it. I do not agree with everything Mykel said in the column, but he did a fine job of writing it, and it got me thinking.

—Susan Mullen

Thanks for the feminist perspective.

—Mariam

[redacted] *Dear bands and labels submitting for review—*

We request two copies of vinyl for review—one for the legendary archive here at the house and one for the unpaid reviewer to keep. For you as the submitter, it's more a courtesy call on your part to send a second copy. The second copy is a sort of "thank you" to the reviewer.

A shitworker here is a person taking the time to help keep a staple of punk culture going by reviewing your submission. We, the shitworkers, will review it graciously regardless of receiving a copy because we love punk and we love *MRR*—we're not doing this for free vinyl.

If you're submitting a release for review from outside the USA, we understand that shipping is extremely expensive and are sympathetic as to why only one copy is sent, as we personally understand the agony of shipping costs here at *MRR*.

If you are sending an extra copy for a particular shitworker or person here at the *MRR* HQ, make it extra clear that it is for them, as things get easily lost here. Everything is done by volunteers—including picking up mail from the PO Box and sorting the mail.

We only need one copy of CD and cassette tape releases.

Up the punx,

—Meals and her two cents

[redacted] *Dear MRR—*

I was up and thumbing through the latest *MRR*, thinking about my good ol' days back on a rooftop in Berkley. I was kind of pestered by the thought of an owl coming and trying to take a nip at a Discharge record of mine, when I couldn't help but let it escape that the very *lifeblood* of *MRR* is in the hands of the children! Yes, it is you *MRR* who holds the key. I was talking some smooth music for a moment and then I got to thinking... Had there ever, even by a fluke, been a rapper covered in *MRR*?

So what if I took a military aptitude test with my mom's stolen car? That ain't illegal. It's punk to have an ice-cold future making cold hard cash baby. Anyway, back to my day job selling Confuse shirts to out-of-work, overweight moms. Fuck me. I was listening to you serve up a hot batch of *MRR* stocking stuffers. I took a pale, red haired girl to a Gism show in Osaka in '82, no lie. How I did it? That's a secret for my next letter! Of course this is hardly news to you as a dear *MRR* friend. Horseplay? More so than ever. I saw a dying dragonfly perched on Alcatraz. Learn me. Alright, now take care of yourself until next time.

Your friend,

—Mr. Wax

Mr. Wax—

It appears that no, we have never covered a rapper in these here pages. That would be because we deal mainly with punk and hardcore music; not because we dislike rap music, au contraire.

In fact, it is a better-know fact, within and outside punk circles, that rap and hip hop share many ethics akin to those held by punks. Since the late '70s-early '80s rappers, hip hop artists, dancers, DJs and small labels have developed and even thrived, thanks to the Do It Yourself ethic—and the strong anti-cop/anti-establishment emotion. Surely the parallels drawn and similarities found between the two counter-creative cultures is an interesting topic to read about.

Thanks for your letter either way! Cheers!

—Lydia

Dear MRR—

Yoooooo! Just got the *MRR* with out interview. Holy smokers, I didn't know it was that long winded, it didn't look that way on the computer. Anyways, we couldn't be happier with how it turned out and I am really thankful that you printed it. Juan y Diego who was interviewed a couple of issues ago may be doing the art for one of our releases! I found out about him through the interview so thanks for that and thanks for letting me whine about nowadays for five pages.

—Brad Ohmwar

MRR shitworkers and readers—

Hey, you like the Cervix postcard I made you? I'm going to be making some Cervix patches like this. I'm also gonna make some Crazy Spirit, Violence, Rayos X and Belgrado patches too. So, if any of the *MRR* readers want some patches, hit me up. Yeah, prison sucks. Oh yeah, I ordered issue #349 and the prison denied it because it had an exposed breast. WTF! Yeah, it's this new warden we got here making our lives hell. Maybe I can get issue #350 sent to me? Well I'll send some stamps in my next letter. I usually have to sell my artwork to get stamps. Problem is, the prisoners here aren't into punk, crust, or anything. I have to draw Mickey Mouse shit to get *MRR*. Dang. But, *MRR* is worth the torture. Readers can reach me at my prison address for them Cervix patches.

Up the Punx!

—Bran Scam

Brandon Begay #83195-008
USP Tucson
PO Box 24550
Tucson, AZ 85734
http://1.usa.gov/QwLPPa

Hello Brandon!—

Thanks for your nifty Cervix postcard, we will make sure Amelia gets that. I hope through these pages you can find some other punks who would want to buy or trade some patches and artwork with you so you can get stamps. About the denied issue, yes, that does undoubtedly fucking suck! We have had a couple other prisoners tell us the same thing and unfortunately whether or not the damn, horrible warden decides to give you your copy or not is beyond our powers. Sometimes it's not even a case of something 'inappropriate' on the cover, it's just asshole wardens being their asshole selves! I hope this doesn't happen to you again and you can get your dose of punk and hardcore from within these pages!

All the best, stay strong!

—Lydia

Hi MRR!—

Thanks for the hella nice review of my zine, *Dreams of Donuts* #14! I worked really hard on that one so it meant a lot to get such positive feedback from you folks. Oh yeah, but I'm writing because in the review my address is wrong. The address listed is Hellarity's, which is gone, but my current one is 3913 Boyle Ct, Sacramento CA 95817.

Stay Punk!

—Heather Wreckage

P.S.: Oh yeah, I miss the part in *MRR* where you ask people a question at shows.

Thank you for alerting us about the wrong address. Also, we have two new shitworkers who have taken on the task of being our new What's the Scoop? pros, so we will be featuring more of those in upcoming issues.

—Lydia

Dear Amelia and MRR—

Thanks for the re-review of the SYSTEM DEFECTOR tape in the October issue. If anyone feels that they need this tape they can email me on davecharge@hotmail.co.uk.

Thanks,

—Dave

Dear MRR—

Thanks so much for the review of my album *Killing the Memories* in issue #353! I am a little curious as to why it would be in the Demos section and not the records section. It was a self made CD-R, sure, but the album was still professionally mastered and had full color artwork. This modest recording certainly isn't in need of a very large print run (to which your reviewer would agree, I'm sure) and I would hate to think that I would be required to pay a printing/pressing company to make even a short run of 100-500 discs to qualify as an actual "album". It seems contrary to the DIY spirit.

At any rate I am grateful for the review and was hoping you might print an address change for me. I ran an ad in that very same issue but the mailing address has recently changed. All mail sent to the old address should be forwarded to the new address by the US Postal Service, but all new orders and/or inquiries should be sent to:

Four Hours Later
230 Oakmont St. #1
Cincinnati, OH 45216

Thanks,

—Ben Schummer, Four Hours Later

Hey Ben—

While I see your point and I agree that making a large run of records is not a point in itself and a "proper" release is not necessarily something printed in hundreds or thousands of copies, in my opinion, getting music out to and reaching out to as many punks as possible should be a goal no matter what the format, but I digress. I can see why it might seem confusing, begging the obvious question "why are non-demos in the demo section?" The answer to that is two-fold.

Firstly, when the magazine first started, there were no CDs or CD-Rs as they didn't exist as a format yet, so we didn't have this issue. Also, tapes were mostly demos, back then as well. CDs first came about and the MRR powers that be decided to include them in the records section. When CD-R's appeared the decision was made to put them in the Demos section, seeing how they were all exclusively, and mostly still are, demos. We keep the layout based on the original format. So the first reason is consistency.

The second reason is that we simply do not have the shitworker power to facilitate the separation of formats in reveiws section. Honestly, some punks would never read about a CD-R if it wasn't mixed in with the demos; and the frequency of CD-Rs being a CD-R-only release is still very rare. The separation of "demos" and "records" is not a qualitative issue or an "anti-diy" issue. Lastly, everything in this magazine is DIY, in spirit and in process, so while I understand your concern, on behalf of all the shitworkers here, I would have to strongly disagree that anything in this magazine is "contrary to the DIY spirit."

Thanks.

—Mariam

Hi MRR—

Congrats to all of you shitworkers, contributors and coordinators for going on with this great magazine! I just finished reading the Xcentric Noise records article (yes, I'm very late), enjoyed it a lot. I wanted to ask you, are you planning a *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* reissue? Any possibilities? Finally, give cheers to Martin, I exchanged a few words with him last year at the Limp Wrist show at the Niceto club in Argentina. Amazing guy, I hope he got his hat back.

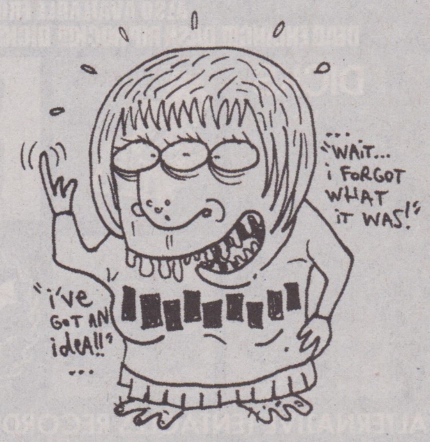
Thanks,

—Roger Sein (Argentina)

Hi Roger—

Indeed, a re-issue of Not So Quiet on the Western Front *is in the works,* MRR *is teaming up with Alternative Tentacles and we're damn excited! Yes,* MRR *is great that way—you can pick up a random copy on a random day and still find killer content. An old column, a record review from a band you'd never heard of, or an interview with an old band you had forgotten... Glad you enjoyed the article and yes, of course we'll pass on your cheers to Martin!*

—Lydia



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(harmony-soaked garage pop)
"button" debut EP

Rubber Cushion
(southern fried r&b punk)
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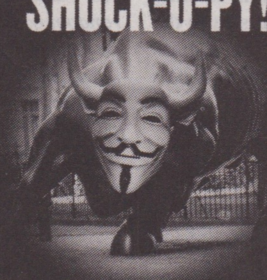

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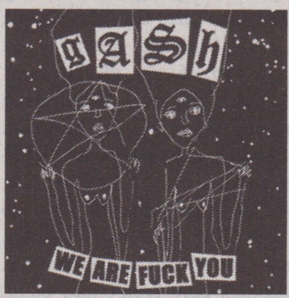

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SAS-09
RATFACE "DEAD RATS BLOOD E.P." 7"

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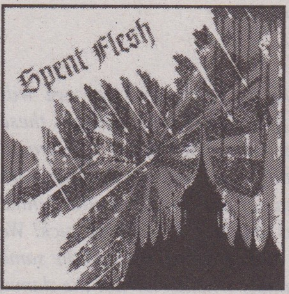

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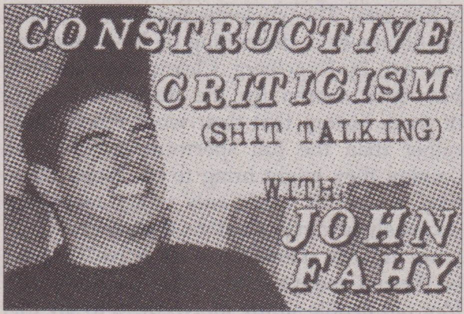
COLUMNS



An Autumn Celebration of Hate and Fucking Resentment

One of my favorite Long Island hardcore bands when I was growing up contributed a track to an anti-death penalty compilation. The track was called "Deserve It" and was played by MILHOUSE. Killer song, the band at their peak, but what gave it teeth were the lyrics and an article accompanying in the insert. The article described the ongoing criminal case of a boy who was picked on at school by a clean cut, sports-prone, junior fireman league student. The boy was fat and disgruntled. At the height of the abuse, the boy snapped and kidnapped his tormentor and brought him home, chained him to a radiator and cut the bully with a blade, while telling him over and over again, "I'm going to kill you." The bully survived and the boy was prosecuted, but the band highlighted the part of the article where it states, "police have not yet heard the perpetrator's side of the story." MILHOUSE wrote in the insert that while they were anti-death penalty that did not mean certain people did not deserve to be killed. The ending lyrics of the song were, "have you ever felt humiliated? Have you ever felt exploited? Or have you ever been undermined? And do you want revenge?"

This month, Americans will choose a new congress and president. The hyperbole that surrounds the election supports the idea that this is a life-changing decision and in many ways, it is. Yes, all politicians play a dirty game, but there are ethical light years apart between someone like Elizabeth Warren and Rick Santorum and choosing between people like them will affect our lives...so yeah, I vote and will continue to do so. What is largely ignored are all the areas of agreement, especially in the race for the presidency. Nothing is mentioned about any kind of change in so-called criminal justice, America being far and away the lead country in imprisoned humans, largely due to the illegality of drugs, refusal to look at the social and medical causes of drug use and trade and, last but not least, judges and elected officials that want to look "tough on crime" and lengthen sentences to please their frightened-sheep electorate. This is the height of scumbaggery. This is why we, punks, hate the fucking political apparatus, regardless of election outcome. Some change is always off the table and this is why half of the electorate don't give a shit and will continue not to. We don't have control, consideration or peace. We're told to live with what we have and take what we can get. We hate because of it.

So what can we change? I submit the idea that taking control of your life is to fuck over your enemies as hard as possible, on a grand scale and in your personal life. I have had few, few enemies in my life, but when I have made them it is because I have exhausted all roads of conversation, negotiation, understanding and consideration to end their abuse. Sometimes, someone is just on the wrong fucking side of life and will find out when you cease to ignore it. I admire someone who is reasonable, understanding and the type to give the benefit of the doubt. I admire them even more when they display those virtues and patiently wait to hammer their opponents in a clever manner with a show of ingenuity and a reduced risk of self-harm. I believe it happens in often, but there are times when someone simply must go down and there is no greater engagement in life than not only refusing to take something lying down, but having your revenge in a calculating fashion.

My mother once had not-very-close relations drop by where my parents worked and had a friendly interaction wherein my mother invited them to come by the house afterward and have tea and chat. Enjoying the encounter thus far, my relatives agreed and met up at my house. My mom broke out some food, served tea and set up an atmosphere of pleasant conversation. Once she sat down herself, however, my mother waded into a longwinded rant about how these guests before her had ritually neglected their terminally-ill brother (and in-law) and how my grandfather had taken the dying man in and cared for him while they did absolutely nothing. They were fucking jaw-dropped and gobsmacked, along with my father, who never saw the ambush coming for a second. The cookies ceased to be ingested. The tea went cold. But my mom humiliated them, sent them home and sent a message with them.

If you're like some of my friends, you see a lot of faux punks dipping their toe into our counterculture and you certainly don't hate them for it, but you know they're lost, not really in the game for the same reasons. I've concluded that the reason we see that is when we realize they have no real hate. I'm not saying all punks are miserable wretches, but if you look deep enough, you'll find some large scale resentment beneath and not just at the idea of going somewhere like Bed, Bath and Beyond. Just a dissatisfaction with shitty people, corrupt economics and politics and a revolting society. It's about feeling like you're a decent person and do not fit in because of it. When you amass a general disapproval of people, the real lowlifes appear even clearer to you.

Another time, on tour, a friend found himself beset with rage at a Waffle House, because some scumbag was withering in his treatment of his servers and endlessly complaining, all for the end result of getting a free meal. It was one of those situations where you struggle to restrain your friend from getting too heated and thereby creating a series of events that may threaten his future livelihood—but should we have? Here were two strangers, one diminishing the other and we all understood we were witnessing wrongdoing. Should someone not have awakened this piece of shit?

The spine of all wrongdoing is the idea that you deserve more than the person next to you and are willing to do whatever it takes to get it. It's what makes you corrupt an honest idea, take advantage of someone sexually, or abuse someone of a different background, class or social standing. When that moment comes when the recipient of your heinous behavior returns and removes your fucking teeth, you will immediately take inventory, attain character and realize that you have done wrong and would do it over again if you could.

If someone transgresses against me or someone I know, I am mostly of the belief that they are under some kind of duress or have endured some kind of pain and act from that. Approaching someone with that understanding is always the first thing that seems right to me. All of us do fucked up things and if we're lucky, have people around us that make us understand it if we do not first ourselves. But when you approach someone honestly and show them that they are undermining and they cease to, or they clearly understand they are doing something fucked up and continue to do it anyway, then you have to stand up for

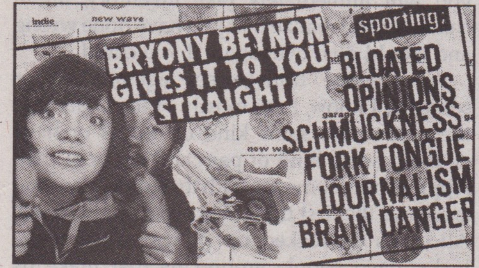
yourself and others.

Anyone who may disagree with my overall idea I would not deride as a hippie, because often taking the high road is a hard path. Succumbing to anger simply because you feel it is totally selfish and unjust. What I would say is that when you have something perpetrated upon you that you would not wish happen to your fellow human; take stock, but then take action. Similarly, if you see your fellow human endure wrong, urge action. What I would also say is these things should happen because it may be us ourselves that needs a fucking-over to attain character—and if we are worth our salt we will realize our wrongdoing and shut the fuck up, listen and learn from it. So I say to you, if you understand you may be ignorant and look at and approach something from all angles and realize, "this is just a person being a scumbag," ruin, humiliate and hurt them anyway you can. Because that is taking control of your life in a place where you can get it—have your fucking revenge. Revenge, well done, is like a good punchline. It makes you think, shows perspective and resonates for a long, long time.

***

I haven't much to say this month in the way of music, other than the SHOXX demo is the best new thing to have happened to my cassette player in I don't know how long. Listeners will pick up on this being some former POLLUTION members at work right away, with from-the-depths, reverbed-out, shrieking vocals and head-stabbing, abrupt riffs that are the perfect tribute to frustration and hopelessness. SHOXX are heading in a direction I think I will dig even more than any members' previous work because there are some sleaze-laden grooves attached and woven into this fucking cesspool of shitty feeling and turns of bleak, surrendering, dead-end dirge. If music turns you into the sounds that permeate it, this shit will have you living in filth, loathing existence and smashing your head against the floor. Get one from C6 Recordings here: 450 Manhattan Ave. Apt 5b Brooklyn, NY 11222 USA or pollution.c6@gmail.com

That's all for this month. Please write me at John Fahy/15011 Lakeview Dr, Apt 2402, Fort Myers, FL 33919 USA or fahy_john@hotmail.com



Last week I went to the opening of an exhibition called *'Someday All the Adults Will Die!' Punk Graphics 1971 – 1984*. The show is in the free project space of a huge Arts centre on the river in London, which has been written about in this column before when I worked there selling ice creams.

I'm not about to grapple (again) with the old 'is punk still punk behind Perspex?' argument, 'cause hey I'm about as over that one you are, it's about as worthy of debate as getting salty over H&M or Forever21 selling 'punk' inspired shirts. Stuff is a thing, you guys; you don't need a Masters in cultural theory to know that (sadly no one told me that.) Whenever punk gets historicised externally or otherwise, one person gets to make those choices of what's in or out, where the centre of gravity is in a story, condensing a messy rhizome into a one-objective-truth statement of affairs, which we all know punk rock never could conform to. You sort of brace yourself for what will be left out; everyone's a know-better-Nancy when it comes to this stuff. To be a punk in twennytwelv and go check out a gallery show that ostensibly takes punk and art as its two axes (or, you could argue, money and history), is to be painfully aware of these issues already; to divorce yourself from the things you do now and at best be ready to nod approvingly with an insiders gaze at what is always only one polished retelling of an unwieldy wire-bundle of stories, one that you know can't be ossified due to still being alive. Oh, and drink some free beer.

So, to the Hayward gallery. In a bizarre serendipity of which I doubt curator Johan Kugelberg (or co-curator Jon Savage) would have been aware, this was not the first time this space had played host to thee DIY punk rock, as I'd been asked to put a gig on there by an adventurous curator in the same space a few years back. They missed a trick not getting bands to play the opening, especially as the private view attendees read a list of old punks par excellence (even Spizz from Spizzenergi was there in his trademark Spizzenergi head-to-toe leathers!) Before the opening itself, there was a panel discussion, for which we got tickets because my buddiest pal Heather has cooler interests than me and really wanted to see Sci-fi/cyberpunk royalty granddad William Gibson in the flesh. It was a pretty interesting line-up even before adding him into the equation. In one chair, Tony Drayton of Ripped and Torn fanzine, affable and enthusiastic after all these years, and next to him Mr. John Holmstrom of Punk magazine. Added into this mix was the person I was most intrigued to hear speak: a detached but caustically funny Gee Vaucher. All of this was chaired by Kugelberg. Some of you may be familiar with the name, he runs a gallery space in NYC—I only vaguely knew of him to have been one of the alleged minds behind KBD 1 – 4.

The talk was curious to say the least. There was a lot of tension in the room, firstly the transatlantic divide (JK is Swedish but lives in NY) with many different takes on what (and why) punk was and the dimensions of its remains. This manifested itself with the speakers staring into that gulf between the low-key bedroom anti-abilities of records and zines made by kids that were often hand-drawn and not even duplicated, but where the method was the meaning and the medium the message, which was, according the Gee, the case with the majority of folks that Crass encountered…and on the other side, a world away, the newsstand professionalism of art schoolers like Holstrom, who snarkily posited at one point that Mark P should have hired a graphic designer (?!) to improve his zine's aesthetic before; then getting torn down by Gee for missing the point entirely, and defending himself by accusing her of being an art graduate 'just like him'. Dragging thing back down to 'who's more authentic?' argument—funny to observe even at this level. The whole discussion was steered (or domineered, depending on how forgiving you are) by Kugelberg. Clearly the panellists had been chosen for the disparate aspects of punk history that their work represented, rather than the full spectrum of whatever opinion they might bring to the table. Thus, they tended to speak only when answering extremely leading questions that were usually long, didactic statements with a 'No?' tagged on the end, more a lecture from one dude with four old people sitting in. Needless to say this didn't lead to very fruitful discussion. Frankly, it all got pretty awkward pretty quickly, as Gee Vaucher's soft but insistent voice was interrupted for the fourth time, when she was corrected on the dates that she made a particular painting or record cover (by a man who would have been eleven years old and living in Sweden on the date in question.) Any insights that did come about as a result of a prompt from Kugelberg were quickly collapsed into his preferred narrative, which was as stop-starty as the faulty powerpoint projections behind them.

There was, overall, a gut-wrenchingly familiar collector tunnel vision on display, that sort of 'true-fan' tendency to retell certain stories frothingly as though you were there, when really it's just because you might own the artefact (because you are super rich but that's another story for another marriage to another Unilever heiress…) it's not your personal history; and a little reverence for the panellists perspectives would have been really well-placed, as 'un-punk' as that might sound. You know, like someone meeting Ian MacKaye and jumping right in there with Minor Threat pressing info questions, then telling him he's wrong anyway, or cutting him off mid-sentence during an anecdote, as Kugelberg did with Gee when she was talking about the Crass/Poison Girls art, so that Kugelberg could tell us the exact circumstances of this being the first punk record he bought, etc. All this is even less endearing to watch when someone's job title is also Historian, with an apparent focus on ephemeral subcultures, which might, one would suggest, involve prizing first hand testimony and the lack of objective truth when it comes these stories, rather than painting one picture of what 'punk art' is or was, so god knows what it would be like to have moments from your own life told back to you without even the smallest hint that you might just remember better. When Gee asserted that she

'applauded the effort but would never have chosen' what Kugelberg and Savage had chosen to represent punk art, he was left momentarily and satisfying agog.

Another discovery that was super interesting, which I had never heard of, was a budget airline, of all things, that was credited with much of the easy exchange of both ideas and records across the Atlantic, and arguably, the explosive birth of punk. I did a little more research into this afterwards. It turns out an enterprising business-man named Freddy Laker launched the world's first daily transatlantic, low-fare scheduled service between London and New York, charging a then incredibly low one-way fare of £32.50 in winter and £37.50 in summer (roughly a third of the other carriers prices) all the way back in 1972, using converted old war planes. However, a naturally sceptical UK Aviation authorities batted Freddy's idea back and forth for almost five years, such was its potency/market-busting potential (or rather state busting, as British Airways was still nationalised at that point.) This was before an intervention by President Jimmy Carter himself, allowed for a one-year experimental reciprocal agreement for the Skytrain project, on the fateful date (for punk, anyway) for 13 June 1977.

There were nevertheless some really cool points brought out of all this tension, though; perhaps more so than if everyone had been intoning as sycophantically about their involvement in punk as the chair was about his by-definition passive collector/historian status. William Gibson recalled the exact moment of listening to Nico and the Velvet Underground for the first time and the clear certainty this was the future of music. Tony Drayton remembering the moment, after talking zines for a bit, that Mark P told him to go and do better if he thought he could, a sneering challenge if ever there was one. Holstrom's remembrances regarding Punk magazine were interesting on a number of levels. The alternative names like Teenage News (great zine name!) or Electronic Comic, for a start, as well as learning more about the fumettis that featured in it. It is easy to forget the level of coverage and widespread attention that this initial flashpoint of punk rock had around this time, brief as it was, whether it was framed as media explosion, folk devil or fashion craze, or all three. And all this before you even addressed the significance of self-publishing, art or any of the actual music. There's the competitive social network and high level of attention focused on punk in NY, the same thing that resulted in Punk magazine being on newsstands and having such a high circulation, and of records pressed into the thousands and the spinning urban media saturation of a city like new York. And then there're the gigs in community centres, the dole, and strikes, and animal rights and Dial house and grey old fucking England. They are opposite ends of a spectrum and yet fall strangely under the same umbrella now that punk histories have been squeezed and historicised into one world, one meaning. Rolling around in their stories and yet their spirit gets punks off in different ways from effectively the same high simultaneously (doing something just for you and your friends, secretly hoping others like it) borne of the same industrious and irreverent 'Fuck you.'

The whole talk left me smirking, with a strong sensation that calling the exhibition *Record Collectors are Pretentious Assholes* would have been closer to the truth. When it came to the Q and A, someone, probably an academic, asked a good question about what to do about the historicisation of punk, something that would have been interesting to hear Gibson's take on. However JK jumped in to talk about ephemeral nature of hip hop in the context of the first archive he did, and the need to preserve countercultural 'remains,' using an example of civil war pamphlets being held at The Bodleian, a library at ultra-exclusive Oxford University, which he gallingly referred to as 'open access.' Interestingly, Holstrom has sold his archive to Yale and JK said his stuff is also going straight to Yale, although presumably not the *insane* record collection of which the exhibition was largely made up.

At the end of the talk came the real bummer, which was a cursory slide of the Aceh punks and watching a preeminent punk historian repeat that fucked up old narrative/lie about how punk 'started in the west' and has spread as far as these curious brown teens, and how lucky we should feel to be free to, presumably, pay six figure sums for seven inch records. This is fucking *lay-zee* and dumb coming from a historian who, in the same breath and with the same rationale, brought up the Pussy Riot case—as if you wouldn't get arrested or probably shot for playing a gig in a Church in some parts of the USA. In a bizarre end to proceedings, panellists plugged their books and, in exchange for contributing to the (obviously cool and well-meaning but still a little "…." after that 'be thankful for democracy' blurb) collection for Pussy Riot, attendees were offered sheets of paper that Johan had sprayed stencils onto using the OG Crass stencils….

When we left the talk and arrived in the exhibition space itself, I was so ready to smirk my way through that too, but of course the records and art on display won me over, as possibly did five free beers and some friendly faces, and I was immediately spellbound/marginally impressed. Cynicism aside, it was super cool to see records (or rather record sleeves) in the flesh that I will never own, all in perfect condition: T.H.E Rutto to Chronic Sick, the Mirrors to Pleemobielz, Pink Dirt to Kaka de Luxe, along with OG Screamers artwork sketches and Danny and the Dressmakers tapes. But hey, only as cool as hearing of a fraught gallery assistant trying to 'fix' the sound system, as ten minutes of screeching feedback played out in the white-walled projector listening room. Music for degenerates.

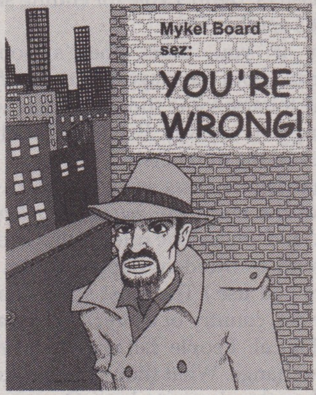
Endnotes

1. Put White Lung on last night. Bloody raging. Last show for me for a while, got other things to focus on, namely diyspaceforlondon.org – GET INVOLVED.

2. This column brought to you by phlegm.

3. This is barefaced but send me shit, it's getting cold here and I won't leave the house but I WILL reply. 80 Lilford Road, London, SE5 9HR.

4. If you show up I will snipe you from my window. So don't.



"How can an American woman go out with a Japanese man? They never say "I love you" or buy flowers or things like that." —A Japanese woman showing surprise at my white female friend moving to Japan to live with a Japanese guy

"Love and marriage, love and marriage, go together like a horse and carriage." —Sammy Cahn lyrics; Frank Sinatra record 1955

Yes! It's so rare to find a girl who'll do your balls. One like her... right now... sucking first one, then the other, between her lipsticked lips.

I sit over her, my feet on either side of her head. My throbbing five inches alert… at attention…as she runs her tongue over my hairitude.

Releasing my twin robins eggs, she moves her tongue through the taint, to the sensitive brown hole. *Pick... pick... poke!!*

Yowsah! Not only does this girl do tea-baggin... she's a rimmer too! I'm in love!

"Marry me!" I shout. "Quick marry me, before I come!"

Fortunately she can't answer. Her tongue is busy on other matters.

Part One: I've squirted screed against marriage ever since I first took chisel to rock to write for *MRR*. It didn't help. More and more screamed out for "the right" to marriage. Even homos got in the act.

These days, if I get an invitation to a wedding, I no longer fork over the tens of dollars necessary to buy some exotic gift... like a veg-o-matic. For what? A temporary team, that'll break up in two years? I don't think so. Sorry, from me, you'll get a five pack of beer-savers resealable bottlecaps. That's it.

But... what if the problem isn't marriage at all? What if it's the Shakespearean... the John Donne... the Harlequin Romance. What if it's the WAY we get married, rather than marriage itself.

Type feminist and arranged-marriage into the BING® search box that Microsoft® forced on you. You'll get 2,760,000 results. Most will

be like: ***Arranged marriages: a subversion of feminism.***

The idea that someone's parents... or a professional *matchmaker* should choose a mate is repugnant to *Personal Freedom®*. To me, that's like saying the idea of someone else choosing your slave master is repugnant to personal freedom. We should be free to chose our own slave masters, right? I vote for ending slavery... but that's another story.

Even if you think there's something wonderful about marriage. That *a family* is the best way to raise some stinking brat who'll end up hating you anyway. Even if you believe all that, look at the numbers!

If marriage *success* is determined by the length of the marriage, *marriage-for-love* loses. The US, land where love rules, is first in divorce. (Or second to Sweden, depending on whose statistics you use.) The most stable marriages are in India, country of ***arranged marriages***.

It's logical. People fall out of love. Their partners change. What they used to like about each other, they begin to hate. Or something's empty. Marriage—or even dropping puppies—isn't like they imagined. After the rim job, there's still someone else's dirty underwear on the floor... and that dingleberry on your tongue. People fall out of love. They don't fall out of an arrangement made by their parents.

Part Two: One of the few other columnists that I actually read criticizes me as being a *Free Speech Absolutist®*. Like the *muckrakers* of old, it's an epithet I wear proudly. Let's check out the alternative view. I'll call it, *No-free-speech-to-those-who-would-deny-it-to-others®*.

The Scene: The big square in front of City Hall in Republicanville, Kansas. A rally... at least 50 people from *Nazis for Romney*. The speaker, a short man with deep-set eyes and Frida Kahlo eyebrows stands at a makeshift podium. He addresses the crowd with a little click of the heels.

"My fellow white Americans..." he starts.

There's a commotion... some shouting... a scream. Some people charge into the crowd from the back... fists flailing... there's a chain... ski masks... black leather jackets. They push through the crowd to the small podium.

One of the attackers, a tall guy with catcher's mitt sized hands, grabs the little speaker by the upper arm. He spins the man. BLAM, a fist to the little guy's jaw. He's down.

The big guy shouts into the microphone. "NO FREE SPEECH TO THOSE WHO WOULD DENY IT TO OTHERS!"

The cops come... there's a melee... blah blah blah. You got it.

Then the papers. More publicity for *Nazis for Romney*... more sympathy than they would've gotten if nobody cared. But there's a deeper issue-- a moral issue.

If I say "No Free Speech to those who would deny it to others," that means I want to deny free speech to some people. According to my own logic, since I want to deny free speech to others, my own free speech should be denied.

See where that goes? It's like the Hatfields and McCoys. EVERYBODY is denying free speech to someone, and then-- because of that denying-- is in turn denied by others. Only the strong can say anything.

Bad/stupid/wrong speech is best countered by good/smart/right speech, not by censorship. Not by government censorship. Not by *The People's®* censorship.

Part three:

MAP (***Mothers Against Penises***) marches down Market Street in San Francisco. The women, mostly walking advertisements for *Sensa*, hold aloft cardboard signs showing pictures of deformed babies. One is missing its arms... just stubs at the shoulder. Another shows an almost normal baby except that in the middle of its head is one enormous eye. The babies look dead, though the enormous eye is open. Under the various pictures is the logo: **IF IT WEREN'T FOR PENISES, THESE BABIES WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN BORN TO SUFFER**.

Strange? Maybe, but their logic is based on fact. For these babies to have been born, a penis was involved. Even if the mother was artificially inseminated, you need a penis to milk the semen from in the first place. Eliminate penises, and you eliminate birth defects. It's logic. It's science. It's easy, right?

Add *history* to *logic* and *science* and you get the atheist/materialist trinity that radical and feminist intellectuals have been praying to ever since Karl Marx gave Catherine MacKinnon her first rimjob.

I'm reading this book called *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. It's an *alternative®* to modern textbooks. The author complains that those gloss over the evils of American history. They don't mention that Thomas Jefferson had slaves... or that the British did not *civilize* a barren land but destroyed an already present civilization... or that people spoke Spanish in America much ***before*** they spoke English.

I've never read *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life* but, from the title, Nietzsche got it half right.

History itself is abuse. When books use it to gloss over the "bad parts" of American history, it's abuse. When books, like *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, use it to prove a point, it's abuse.

That book, for example, in an attempt to make it seem like the Civil War was fought about slavery, picks a quote from the South Carolina constitution. If it were honest, there'd be a pro-slavery quote from the Articles of Confederation. There isn't. The only mention of slaves in that document is the 3/5 voting rule... same as in the US Constitution. Not much of a reason for war.

The reality? A bunch of reasons... a complex web... with the rich and corporate as the spiders.

To some, history is a series of big moves made by great men. It is presidents, generals, people whose achievements *Changed the Course of History.®* That too is wrong.

If I get a particularly good blowjob... one that includes my balls... ***that*** changes the course of history. My history, at least. EVERYTHING changes the course of history.

Maybe, history is a series of misdeeds and revenge, then revenge for the revenge, then revenge for the revenge for the revenge. Each time a different side wins, the winners rewrite the history, making themselves the good guys. I donno.

We can look at the past and see things from other vantage points. History is an interesting task, and it may be able to shed some light on the present. But it doesn't teach us what to ***do*** in the present. Neither does logic or science.

With free speech, the answer is not to ban it, but to provide a better alternative. With history, the answer is not to provide alternative history, but to let it go.

Penises make birth defects is logical, scientific and historical. It is also wrong.

What we need instead are absolutes... like free speech. We need some basic principles we can judge are right. Then we work from those principles. I propose the following as starters:

1. People have the right to say whatever the fuck they want, though THE PLACE and VOLUME they say it (like during the scary part of a horror movie) can be ***slightly*** regulated. Any regulation must apply equally to everyone. ***Content*** of the speech cannot be a criterion.

2. People do NOT have a right to riches, or money. It's the duty of the government to insure everyone has a basic level of existence: food, housing, clothes, healthcare. The government can and should do this by taking from the wealthy and giving to the poor.

3. Other countries have other systems of government. Ours should not interfere in other systems except to allow open and unlimited entrance to people who want to leave those other systems.

4. Consenting people have a right to do anything among themselves.

Other suggestions are welcome. I'm sure they'll come.

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ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or blog viewers (mykelsblog.blogspot.com/) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column. Your zines, Cds/records, and... er... *private videos*... can and should be sent to me at: Mykel Board, POB 137, Prince Street Station, New York NY 10012]

—>*Sure corporate taxes are too high dept: The International Paper Company* gave their CEO, John Faraci, a 75 percent pay hike in 2010. His new pay? $12.3 million. The company paid in taxes? Er... they got a $249 million refund. Good work John, you earned your pay.

—>*T-shirts are speech too dept: The Lincoln Journal Star* reports that officials at a Willie Nelson concert at the Nebraska State Fair told a woman she couldn't wear her Marijuana-leaf t-shirt. Why? It had a pot leaf on it.

The fair director said "this is a family event and we don't permit the promotion of illegal activity." Of course Willie Nelson himself is vocally pro-legalization of the herb.

—>Representative John Fleming, Republican of Louisiana, attacked Obama's proposal to tax the wealthy. His business took in $6.3 million last year, but he said "my profits are a fraction

of that."

"By the time I feed my family, I have maybe $400,000 left over." Don't you feel sorry for him? By the way, the median US household income is just under $50,000.

—>It should be obvious department: The National Coalition Against Censorship reports that the TEXAS REPUBLICAN PARTY's new platform opposes teaching "critical thinking skills." Why?

"They have the purpose of challenging the student's fixed beliefs and undermining parental authority."

Of course, they're right. Critical thinking DOES challenge fixed beliefs, but I think there's another reason.

Texas Republicans are afraid that if people thought critically, they'd never vote Republican (except for the 1%®)

—>Merry Xmas Nessie! dept: A religious school in Louisiana uses a textbook asserting that THE LOCH NESS MONSTER is a relative of a dinosaur... and that proves dinosaurs are alive and evolution is wrong. That school will get state funding under a new voucher plan in Lousiana. The plan will also give money to schools that teach that "apartheid preserved cultures" and "the Ku Klus Klan was an agent of reform."

—>*Police Dept. of the Year dept: The Palm Beach Post* reports that a Florida cop honored in 2010 as OFFICER OF THE YEAR, was busted for selling meth for the last two years.

I say, meth, huh? No wonder he was OFFICER OF THE YEAR... a real go-getter, I bet.

—>Is that a pistol in your pocket or are you shortsless dept: WTSP.com reports that Polk County FL Sheriff Grady Judd said the county was ending their Free Underwear for Men in Jail® program. Says Judd, "If inmates want to wear underwear in jail, they can buy it, just like had-working Polk County citizens do."

I guess he means the citizens OUT of jail, earning enough money to buy underwear. Otherwise, it's like asking a slave to pay for his own housing and food. Oh wait... that's capitalism, isn't it?

—>Remember him? Dept: According to a report by the *Center for Immigration Studies*, 80% of the new jobs in Texas while Rick Perry's was governor went to newly arrived immigrants. Half of those were in the country illegally. The employment rate for native-born Texans actually declined during Perry's regime.

—>Take that Bribe, please dept: There is an international organization that creates a *"Corruption Perception Index."*

It is a view on how "clean" different governments seem in countries around the world. Cleanest is New Zealand. At the bottom of the list, ranking # 182 is Somalia.

The US? Number 24. And I think the only reason America scored THAT high, was that someone paid off the survey takers.

—>*Thanks dept:* I want to thank the Rev Norb for the inspiration to strategically use those little Registered circled R's(®) to make several points. If those R's don't appear in this column, blame the typesetter for interfering with my free speech.

Things have definitely changed for the better since I broke my toe. It happened at the end of one of the worst, most exhausting weeks of my life, when I happened to be in the frontline of a present-apocalyptic, nuclear, no-mercy-for-all war with my family, my work and my love life. Guess I just came to a point where even a broken toe could be the best thing. My mother had to call me twice a day just to make sure I was alright. I chain-smoked packs of cigarettes just to have myself lost in a glamorous cloud of stating "I know it kills me that's why I try to get addicted." Put it down—too much work to do with no result. And I just broke down too many times when I had to realize some people do care about me and just want me to be happy or only feel better. Tears of joy in the state of desolation. First I went to an all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet then said fuck the bad parts and let the good things come. Basically this is how shallow my emotions are and yes this is how quick I decide to end my melancholy. Even though it's still with me as it always was, because something's gotta fuel the rage that made me who I am.

We played a horrible alley show at an industrial site next to dumpsters after ten hours of painstaking work. My band, which is collapsing since forever, got invited to play at a skate contest's after-party. We fucked up our set big time. So much for only playing the bass for months now—I still can't play in the dark cause I have to look for the dots and sometimes mushrooms are not really helping one of our guitar players either with being in tune and time. I had no grimace, no motives and turned my denim-covered back on the crowd. Realized we are too far gone from saving this show, and thus forcing some fun into our fifteen minutes to live our life-that-really-matters-span.

The sex of punk is playing a show. And to look sometimes on the crowd and see friends just being there for us as we punks are always there for each other when it comes to just banging our heads and enjoying each other's desperate noise was touching. Like a mother who cheers for her kid even when there's no hope the poor kiddo will make it. Agreed, this was bad, and we realized it was a good thing that we always stuck to the description of our music as "psychedelic Oi!" but it was also a predestined falling in a good way, being a good excuse for the bad way failures.

So with lost faith I just shrugged my shoulders thinking whatever is cool with me and just let the night be what it should be. Sipped some of my leftover beers and went inside to the skate pool where the ashes of the competition were. There I just transformed myself into a skate rat. I skated and broke my toe but I was happy, but by then it was more like the circumstances allowed me to. Everything just seemed to turn better.

I mean skating is fun, when you're drunk nothing really hurts and finally even with the heavy pretence of almost-pros we just were there to be happy. Those cute punks trying to do as many old school tricks as possible, shitting their pants when it comes to dropping into a mini ramp. But we already fucked up everything with our collapsing shitty music, so we of course had nothing to lose. And who cares about others, about anything, when it's just fun what we do and no one gets hurt?

The truth is, I whine so much here in these columns but I guess just as everybody else I love life and I would love to live it fully. But this relation sometimes seems one-sided. But that night, whatever was in me, and maybe could be caught some days in brief moments fully, came to the surface and the halo of "I do care about having fun" and it was my guiding light for the rest of the night. I later fell down from a bus seat when the bus took a minor turn, at that point we would have laughed even if a tram cut my legs off. I slept deeply and had amazing dreams.

The next day friends came from Greece to visit and stayed for a couple days. An old-time friend and her friend who were our company for few days in a one room flat, sleeping four of us in two beds, cooking so much together and occupying bars.

Then White Lung came to play two shows. With a friend of mine we started booking bands we love and I guess we booked White Lung at a good time. They made it to a sold out show with 160+ people and a crazy sound guy who gave their singer Mish a backrub cause, as he stated it, she was transmitting bad vibes. The show was good. Sadly or not, the other show in a smaller town where my brother from another mother set up the show was better. But even ours was one of the best of this year's local shows. Everybody danced, I cracked my ribs, people were happy and enthusiastic. Skinheads were stagediving, girls were dancing. We listened to local gangster rap jams in our flat and passed out on the floor around three in the morning.

The same day as the show our new zine got published and it was just awesome to hold something we have done in our hands, to look on it, to browse through it and transform it to money to buy some beers.

I also went to see White Lung at that other town. It was good to meet them as people we already know. They also played a packed show there. I hung with many amazing people and woke up puking into a toilet. No idea what will happen to this band but they are amazing, awkward people who can party or just be nice and dedicated enough to sleep on floors next to drunk Europeans and smile while eating punk

stews. That rage that they are carrying and the crazy guitar parts and entirely destroying phlegmatism is something that is hard to resist. It definitely got me to have tons of fun. My hope for next time they come is that I can sing a duet with them for their song "Tales."

During these fun days we also had band practices, which are still pretty intense. Can't wait to get these energies and punk love out on stage and crush everything that is shit with our existence. For example epic neo crust. No beef and total trust in full will, but that genre seems to become something here as in the beginning of the '00s when every band had at lest one ska song. I don't mean we will be the best band ever, but everybody has to have an agenda right?

Then last weekend after work I was reading about the pointlessness of life, which filled me with joy. 'Cause it really is just mostly what you make out of it. And the least you like it, the more sense you wanna force into it. It's like creating something beautiful, even when you're making it alone in locked rooms. And what is the big problem except for the fact that things somehow turn badly 'cause norms are hateful and anti-social? I have friends, I have punk, I'm doing what I love with whom I love. The rest shouldn't matter. A crazy old man told me it's not always easy to be an outsider. And he was right. Who is anti-social: the one who is silent and never bothers anyone or the one who always talks but doesn't say anything and at the first moment when someone is different from them they just become hostile?

This stupid outside world. But again, when I was kinda down or in an unstable frightening state of mind, life had found me. I got asked to do a monthly radio show in collaboration with people who are down to the core. It happened a week after I found three sealed tapes on my windowsill. Probably the construction workers left them there who are camping in front of our window fixing the roof for weeks. I stole 'em, will fill them with mixes and send them away so I didn't steal for keeps.

Nowadays I just think about music I should mix together. I hope it will get me closer to paying closer attention to songs themselves, not just the grooves and the whole punk vibe. I'm such a terrible listener although I constantly have to hear something. The only thing I knew for sure when I did the radio show for *MRR* was that I wanted to play "I Need You" from Victim. This amazing Irish band just wrote all the perfect songs. Not a huge fan of American pop punk although sometimes I can be hypnotized by some beer-soaked bearded losers. But the Irish Bloodstains across… era bubble gum rage is the shit for sure.

My favorite band is Victim even if Stiff Little Fingers was the band to convince me to be punk. Victim are just loud and perfect. If Kevin Shields was a teen in Ireland at that time I'm kinda sure they should have made a huge impact on him and the sound he has created. Wall-of-sound, perfect harmonies that are just hitting me. Everything is loud. Even the acoustic parts you can hear the picks shredded into the strings. So lively. I just wish I could find a vinyl version of their discography record that I only own in digital format. This band has harmonies that are beyond punk, and still you can vision the torn apart jeans. Too bad "I Need You" is too connected to me that I only listen to it at specific periods of my life. And when I'm not able I just miss the loudest song ever written.

I was wondering a couple weeks back about listening to music without being emotionally engaged. Not without liking it, but without searching for yourself in it. Without letting it influence your mood too much, or at all. 'Cause as you can suggest I like to over think everything and juxtapose my visions with emotions that I get from music, so sometimes I'm unable to listen to bands and just enjoy them. I started to envy some of my friends who are listening to just some unbearable music. I was hanging with them and they were just nerding out on noise-but-not-music, grind/speed core with so much joy. That genre for me was always about suffering and lifeless thoughts born in filthy basements. And not the ones I hang in but the ones that are more fitting to keep runaway child slaves. But they seemed to enjoy it more than ravers wave to whatever is their party music. For them, it was just pure joy and through them I could see that loving music doesn't always have to connect to relating to the music's mood as fully as you can. Because while that could sometimes be the best thing ever, I guess having a different look on things isn't that bad either.

So I'm jamming D-Clone right now and thinking this is just fun and it works. One of the best new records I've heard over the last few weeks is the Rat Columns LP. I was a Rat Columns fan before I had even heard a second of sound of theirs. But someone who is the mastermind behind all those hopelessly vibrating riffs in Rank/Xerox, and being a part of the perfect fan-boy hardcore revival of Lou Barlow's childhood-recreating band Burning Sensation can do no wrong. I saw them a few months before in San Francisco and they ruled my little world. Although the EP was weirdly tame and cute, this LP just holds a parade for every emotion what weirdos have to deal with. This record is just pure music. It's loving melodies, guitars, noise and sounds. It's just being aware of things. It's great because a person put himself in it. It's great because it's music to look up onto empty-but-still-lit office buildings while your night bus is taking you home from a failed date and everybody around you is drunk and irritatingly loud. But you can lose yourself in the moment and be mesmerized from this treasure. Those dreamy guitars are helping you. Those strange blippings that could come from equipment used in German new-wave sci-fi movies. Sometimes it sounds like *Loveless* covered by a shy garage band through your neighbors' walls. Other times it's just beach music for those who only wonder on the shores on foggy days. There is a fog all around the record that carries its magic. Such a wonderful record. From kids to kids. It's larger than life but still fits into a room.

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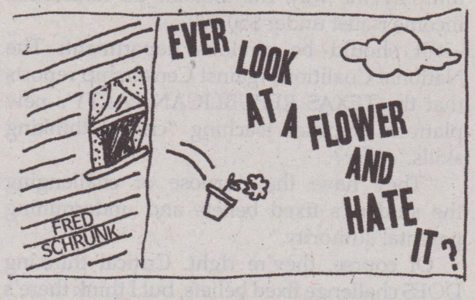


These Are the Days Of Our Lives

For the first time, in quite a few years, I got a tattoo that was *not* band related. I'll be self-indulgent (and deprecating) for a moment and tell you about them. (I'll talk about shows and records soon, I swear) The last three stick-and-pokes I received were (1) A FLIPPER tattoo in Kid Kevin's kitchen in San Pedro. (2) NIRVANA lyrics, while on Kensey's couch in Asheville. And (3) BLACK FLAG bars, crudely drawn on my leg to cover up an ex-girlfriends name. I'll stop right here for a second to defend myself, beause in the past, when people have learned I tattooed an old gal's name on my skin, the look they give me is one of sorrow mixed with pity. No need for it either. Beause even though things didn't work out, I don't regret it for a second. I think getting a tattoo of your partner's name is one of the sweetest, most romantic things you could ever do. It's way more passionate than any wedding could ever be. But hell, I guess even spray-painting your partner's name on an overpass is more enchanting than marriage. Not that I'm against marriage, like a lot of punks. I think it's cool (congrats Matt and Julia). I just have a very hillbilly way of showing that I care. Luckily for me though, one of the coolest bands on the planet also has a logo that's one of the best cover-up tattoo options on the planet. All's well that ends well, right?

So for this latest tattoo, I got a cracked egg. Of all the dumb shit I've put on my body, I think this one represents me best of all (yep, even more so than the opening line to "Smells Like Teen Spirit")...(Gawd, what's wrong with me?!?) You see, as long as I can remember, I've felt like an outsider and an outcast. Not in a cool James Dean way, but like a lonely, pathetic way. I was an only child and growing up never had any strong friendships. I was in the sixth grade when for the first time I had a "true friend". It was the first time I was ever able to relate to someone my own age on a subject aside from toys and cartoons. It was the coolest feeling ever. We were more or less inseparable until a year-and-a-half later, when he moved 45 minutes out of town to live with his mom and her blonde ponytail-clad biker boyfriend. We kept in touch, but being separated at this critical moment in adolescent development took its toll. We grew in two different directions. He got into *Spawn*, ICP and psychedelics. I got into NIRVANA, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, wearing dresses and the elusive thought of making out

with boys. Both still freaks to our peers, but opposite sides of the same coin.

Since then I've felt that true connection twice more, both fleetingly. But really I don't blame anyone aside from myself. I hunger for isolation and grow nervous of impending social interactions. Left to my own devices, I'll just hangout by myself all day, everyday. And love it. But along side this desire is one that cuts down even deeper. It's the desire to be part of a crew. Part of a gang. Part of a group of best friends that are so tight they all even wear the same leather jackets. Like the T-Birds in *Grease*. (Quick moment of further self-humiliation: I've seen the movie *Grease* well over one 100 times) Okay, I should defend myself again. So growing up I spent every summer in Zagreb, Croatia at my grandmother's apartment with her and my aunt's family. There wasn't much to do, and my two cousins and I were bored constantly. Without cable, there were no interesting shows on TV for children. But my Uncle did have a VCR and a few videotapes, among them was a taped-from-Croatian-TV copy of *Grease*. But it wasn't called *Grease* in Croatian, it was called "Brillantina". And like little kids tend to do, we watched that video every fucking day of summer. Year after year. We'd even do role-playing pretend games where my cousins would pretend to be "Pink Ladies" and I'd pretend to be cool-as-ice Danny Zuko. Some times acting out scenes from the movie, and sometimes making up our own story lines

My yearning to be a graceful dancing greaser never fully left my psyche, and can probably explain why a sixteen-year-old vegetarian Fred was willing to drop all his savings for a cool leather jacket. But even more so, the desire to have a solid group of best bud pals was formed and cemented by that stupid movie. And has always been elusive. The ridiculous thing is, this probably isn't unobtainable. At all. My hunger for isolation is my only real problem. I wanna be part of the dozen, but something inside keeps me away. Maybe instead I'll start a gang of lonely shut-ins. We can wear a cracked egg logo on the backs of our vests. We'll act tough, stay out late, and laugh too loud. Wanna join?

Shows and Records

This last month THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB came to San Francisco to play a few (sloppy) shows. It was awesome and very grounding. Not because I'm a super huge PIPEBOMB fan, but because I needed to witness a redemption. Allow me to explain. So a month or two ago, my friend Eggplant was sleeping over at my house. And out of our house's free box, he fishes out a DVD Plan-it-X made, called *If It Aint Cheap It Aint Punk*. Before putting the movie on, he made some crack about wanting to watch a car wreck. I imagined the movie was going to be bad, but *holy shit*! I was not prepared for this. Do yourself a favour, and never watch this DVD. It's like a movie you would make if you were sixteen and trying to explain "punk" to your very understanding parents. But you were purposely making it sound tame and safe so they'd let you go to the punk show downtown on a school night. And squarely in the middle of this garbage pile was Terry and the rest of PIBEBOMB lamenting on the beauty of positive attitudes. It was ugly. But I know Terry; I've talked with her numerous times and I know she rules. Like, fully rules. But for some reason I couldn't shake the nightmare of this fraudulent "documentary". And every time someone would put on a PIPEBOMB song in the record store, I'd cringe a little bit.

Well, fast forward to this show, and it's a full cleanse for me. They ruled. They were wild, loose and super fun. One thing I really liked about late-era PIBEBOMB is that they would shed the acoustic-folksy side live and play loud distorted versions of their songs. It felt like this was how they were meant to be played all along. Also, side note: why are there always three wasted crusty kids at every PIPEBOMB show who insist on creating a circle pit. You know, that kid with the SUICIDAL hat and bandana? He's always part of it. Doesn't matter what town you're in. Second side note: One of my favourite parts of PIPEBOMB shows is watching these crusty kids while they try (and fail) to sing along to every song.

One further bit of related good news; Terry and Rymodee recently started a new band called ZIPPERS TO NOWHERE. They're so good! It's like PIPEBOMB, but way punker. It's like if they cherry-picked the aspects of PIPEBOMB that made them rule, and synthesized them into a brand new band. Don't get me wrong, Teddy rules too (personally and musically), but this has nothing to do with the drumming. It has everything to do with the approach. They have a new record out, an LP. Check it out and see what I'm talking about.

Another record that will be hard to find, but worth the hunt, is the new CRACKBOX LP. They put out an awesome 7" EP last year and this LP is every bit as good. New Orleans crust-pop with mutant vocals and catchy hooks. Total mind melt.

Hey! What happened to NUDE BEACH?!? I saw them play last year and they killed it. They came back to California this last week and they got all SPRINGSTEEN on the place. Like really SPRINGSTEEN! I mean it was cool, I dig the BOSS too, but dang, what happened over this last winter?

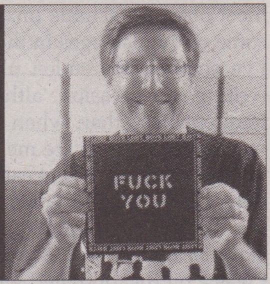
DIVERS from Portland just put out a 7" that is really heavy on the SPRINGSTEEN too. (I hope this isn't the next trend to replace goth-punk. 2013 could get scary) Both songs are heavy on the sentiment and heavy on the ruling. If you (also) listen to "The River" with embarrassing frequency, you need to hear these guys.

What else? Lengua Armada put out a US version of the CRIATURAS LP. Obviously that destroys. Oh, and Scott from NAR has a new band called ENGLISH SINGLES. Their 7" is badass. Classic Sacto pop punk.

Well, that's it for now. I'm tired and my back hurts. But if for any reason you wanna get in touch with me, you should write me!

Fred Schrunk, PO Box 460207, San Francisco CA 94146

AL QUINT



My Name's Al and I'm an Insufferable Know-It-All

I'm not an alcoholic nor a drug abuser but am I a music junkie? You'd better believe it. And it goes a step further than that. I'm one of those people who have to foist arcane musical knowledge on other people. Correcting people's factual errors, pointing out trivia about bands or artists no matter where I am or what social situation I'm in. I imagine that's why I haven't always *had* a lot of social situations, at least when I was younger. But I'm the guy who *has* to prove I'm right even if it means, say, interrupting my lovely wife Ellen's sleep. One Monday, I played KILLDOZER's cover of Don McLean's "American Pie" on the radio show and, when we went to bed, we were talking about the song and his follow-up hit "Vincent," which she loves. I asked her if she'd ever heard the song "Dreidel," which was a minor hit in 1973, barely scraping the Top 20. It made one of my first mix-tapes after I got my Lloyd's tape recorder for my Bar Mitzvah. She wasn't familiar with it so, of course, I got out the tape and played it for her. At 12:30 in morning. On a night where she had to get up around 6 AM. How I've managed to stay married for almost 25 years is definitely a good question. Incidentally, that Killdozer cover is hilarious, especially the little guitar runs at the end. Anyway, I found an MP3 of "Dreidel" and put it on a mix CD I made for her. Last I saw, that CD was under a pile of clothes.

"Dreidel" is what I call a NAS-FUP—a "not as successful follow-up" single." An artist that's usually a one-hit wonder who would try to recapture the magic, sometimes shuffling around the melody a bit, but it wouldn't work. I'm sure some of you have heard IDES OF MARCH's 1970 hit "Vehicle" on an oldies show—total CHICAGO-style horn rock that was in fashion around then. They then released a song called "Superman" that pretty much flopped—my *One Hit Wonders* book says it hit #64. Some 90s era pop-punk band whose name I forget (I flunk the trivia test there) covered "Vehicle." It was the only good song on the album. So there's a tenuous punk connection to keep it within MRR's scope.

That's right, I have that book within reach, on a shelf full of other music reference books that I've accumulated since I was a kid. I still have all my old music magazines, as well, and will sometimes peruse them. That's where a lot of this alleged knowledge came from. I devoured that shit growing up and still consult those books and magazines and now the internet is an endless fount of the

most obscure factoids imaginable. I can recite some of the passages in those books verbatim. I've shamelessly stolen phrases for my own writing, on occasion, although it's a lot less frequent now than when I first got into this writing thing. Ever see me describe something as "flesh-flaying"? That came from the one and only Lester Bangs, when he was describing the VELVET UNDERGROUND's *"flesh flaying guitar onslaught"* on "Sister Ray." I have to admit I was a bit disappointed when I first heard the *White Light White Heat* album and think, taken as a whole, that the Velvets' discography is somewhat overrated. But the two songs that make up side two of that album—"I Heard Her Call My Name" and "Sister Ray"—are mind-blowing. More interesting than the latest generic retro-hardcore 7", that's for sure.

I'm not even sure when the know-it-all affliction started. When I was 10 or 11? Younger? I remember sharing kernels of musical knowledge when I had a sleepover at my friend Jack's house. His older sister Julie had some records and I was telling her all these obscure facts and she finally put on a record and said "let's just listen to some music, OK?" It was Carole King's *Tapestry* album and that got me out of the room pretty quickly. It still does to this day—it's Ellen's favorite album of all time and when she puts it on, it's time to go downstairs and listen to DISCHARGE. Julie just contacted me on F*cebook a few months ago. She seems like a kind and gentle soul and I get the impression she's freaked out by the punk and hardcore videos I post on my page. She remembered when we hung out and listened to that album and I told her I still wasn't a Carole King fan, but we've remained "friends" on there.

I also had a childhood friend named Alex—he knocked out his front tooth when playing football with me on the school playground and he ran into a pole while going out for a pass. Despite that incident, I was invited to his house, on the rich side of town, and we were listening to "Hey Jude" by the Beatles. Alex's dad was in the room listening with us and I pointed out some triviality about the song while it was still playing and I think it was interfering with Dad's enjoyment of it so he said, *"what are you? A music lover?"* I think what he was trying to say was, *"why are you pointing out this meaningless shit while the song is building to its "na, na-na, na-na-na-na climax? Please shut up and let me listen to the fucking song."* Amazingly, I don't think I got invited there again. I've stayed in touch with Alex, sporadically. He actually makes a pretty decent living as a "jester." Don't believe me? Check out www.alexthejester.com. But I'd appreciate it if you didn't mention the football or the "Let It Be" incidents. In fact, don't mention this column to him at all.

It's happened on the job—I'm not just talking about my record store days, where it's actually an *asset* to be an insufferable know-it-all--but before that. Like when I was a management trainee for the Zayre discount department chain, which I just mentioned in this space a few months ago. Since I was being given an overview of the entire store, I spent a few days in the cash room, which was freezing from the air conditioning but the woman who worked in there (can't remember her name--Marta, maybe?)--was awesome and I dazzled her with my musical knowledge while we listened to the radio. When we heard the KINKS song "Destroyer," she was convinced it was another Kinks' song but I knew the correct one. That song pretty much cribs the riff from "All Day And All Of The Night" and revisits the theme and lyrics of "Lola." That's why my co-worker was fooled. It's from their '81 album *Give The People What They Want* and that's EXACTLY what they were doing and it was a pretty big hit on rock radio.

Hell, I've even shown off my obscure knowledge to the occasional musical "icon." When I first heard "Big Giant Cock" on TESCO VEE'S HATE POLICE *Gonzo Hate Vibe* album, it was the same riff as on semi-obscure early 70s hard rock band CAPTAIN BEYOND's "I Can't Feel Nothin'." When I mentioned it to Tesco, he gave a sly smile and confessed to the pilferage. I couldn't figure out if he was impressed with my knowing that or irritated that someone had figured it out.

It continues to this day. It's a habit I can't break. Not too long ago, Ellen and I watched *High Fidelity* again, the movie with John Cusack and Jack Black, about a guy who owns a record store and how his musical obsessions aren't exactly great for his personal life. There's a scene where Dick, a very quiet and shy clerk, sees a girl checking out some newer punk bands and tells her about a record he thinks she might like—it's *Inflammable Material* by STIFF LITTLE FINGERS. He drops the needle and "Suspect Device" starts. Only it's not the album version you hear on the audio track but the single version. I always have to point that out when seeing this movie. And now I've shared that bit of info with you. Isn't your life all that much the better for it?

Hell, it just happened now. While I was working on this column, I got a call from a DJ friend named Jack (not the same Jack I mentioned above). He does club dates and also has an on-line show and was running down the playlist with me, asking my opinion on what he played—not bad although I would have picked another song by THE CLASH besides "This Is Radio Clash" and, come on, SHAM 69's "Tell Us The Truth" or "Borstal Breakout" is a MUCH better song than "Hersham Boys." And he could have dug a bit deeper than "Public Image" by PIL. But, hey, he asked! And I'm impressed he played "Tomorrow's World," a lesser-known track from KILLING JOKE's incredible first album. In any case, I guess *someone* appreciates my know-it-all-ism.

*****

So let's move on and I'll impart some brilliant observations about recent releases. You can stop rolling your eyes now.

Up first are some discs by bands from my home state of Massachusetts. FOREIGN OBJECTS' new 7", *Mammonism/Fable*, is the first recording since their awesome *No Sensation* album and the first with new bass-player Andrew Farr. "Mammonism," provides edgy rock with some atonal trumpet bleating mixed in with a sturdy bass-line and Terry's piercing vocal. "Fable" is a succinct, straight-forward burner. In all honesty, it took a few listenings to sink its hooks in but it's another solid release. (Cut The Cord That..., ctct-records.tumblr.com)

Two heavier MassHole bands, INSULT and RAMPANT DECAY, have hooked up for a split 7". Both are kind of "outsider" Massachusetts hardcore bands in that they've never been part of the cool clique. Insult were around in the 90s but haven't been heard from that much in recent years. These 2010 recordings show them to still be a pretty potent outfit. Occasional blasting/double-speed thrash but with stop-on-a-dime tightness and "Diddler On Parole" takes a dirgier route. Rampant Decay have a little death metal in their engines but the hardcore side also comes out on their three pounding songs. Should I be trite and say both bands play ugly songs for ugly times? Oops--too late. (Patac, www.patacrecords.com)

Meanwhile, the WHITE PAGES bash out fast, geeky and fun punk on their one-sided, four song 7" EP. The songs made me think of early SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN with the trebly guitar sound and unaffected charm, although Joe's vocals are more nervous-sounding. And I doubt you'll be able to get Christine's "ah-ah-ah" backing vocals from "Please Kill Them" out of your head. Quite enjoyable. (whitepages.bandcamp.com)

Finally, there's the impressive debut 12" *Sun Damage* by Western Mass. band POTTY MOUTH. Snaky punk/post-punk with strong melodies that, at times, make me think of another band that started in WMass and that would be THE PIXIES, at least with some of the semi-surfy guitar lines.. Six downright catchy songs with the hooks emerging from the arrangements as well as Abby's charming vocals that flow from sweet to assertive shout 'n swoop for a song like "Superfriends" while the band bash away behind her. Potty Mouth don't go for a brazenly pop sound but that's the effect--a blissfulness sets in but it also has an edge. (pottymouth.bandcamp.com / Ride The Snake: www.ridethesnakerecords.com)

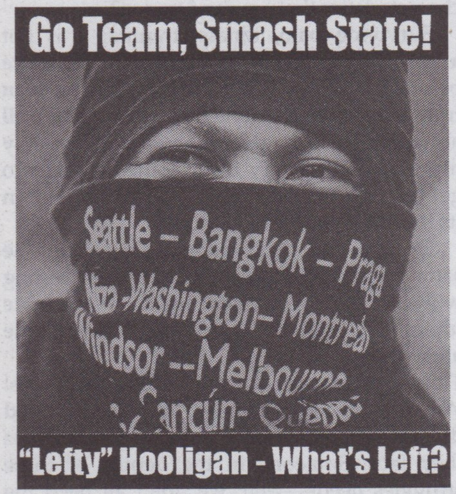
One of last year's pleasant surprises was the first album by POOR LILY. They've returned with a new three song CD. High powered, high caliber wrecking-ball rock drawing from the well of NOMEANSNO, VICTIMS FAMILY, etc. Vocals that channel the ghost of D. Boon and the songs are jarring, particularly the final, three-minute-plus "Third Rail," which rides a scintillating guitar signature into more of a focused frenzy. The other two songs possess a chaotic, ripsaw approach. Definitely worthy of your attention. www.poolily.com.

CRANK are a NY power trio playing some ugly 90s Amphetamine Reptile-inspired swill with beefy aplomb. Big, rubbery bass lines--which comes across as the lead instrument at times--jabbing guitar and crashing drums, accompanying gravelly vocals. While a

song like "Another Dead Place" gets a little lumbering, the direct attack of such songs as "(You Bought Your Ticket) Take The Ride," "Sour" and opener "The OrganGrinder" have no lack of throttle. And the cover choice of the CRUCIFUCKS' "Democracy Spawns Bad Taste" is inspired although, let's face it, no one's going to come close to Doc Dart's inimitable vocal. Quite an immense sound. (crankpunks@gmail.com)

Out of space, again, I'm finally doing the SV on a bit more frequent basis, so check out subvox.blogspot.com for more reviews.

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net, www.sonicoverload.net



First, it was Paul Ryan who said he was a big *Rage Against the Machine* fan. This prompted RATM guitarist Tom Morello to comment in an August 16, 2012 *Rolling Stone* editorial: *"Paul Ryan's love of Rage Against the Machine is amusing, because he is the embodiment of the machine that our music has been raging against for two decades. Charles Manson loved the Beatles but didn't understand them. Governor Chris Christie loves Bruce Springsteen but doesn't understand him. And Paul Ryan is clueless about his favorite band, Rage Against the Machine."*

Then, Muse frontman Matt Bellamy, in a September 29, 2012 interview in *The Observer, regarding* their number one 2009 album The Resistance, complained that: "In the US the conspiracy theory subculture has been hijacked by the right to try to take down people like Obama and put forward right-wing libertarianism." Bellamy defined himself as "a left-leaning libertarian – more in the realm of Noam Chomsky. It doesn't all have to be about guns and land protection, y'know? So yeah, I do find it weird. [The anthemic song] Uprising was requested by so many politicians in America for use in their rallies and we turned them down on a regular basis." Which prompted arch-conspiracy theorist and right-wing nut job extraordinaire Glenn Beck to write Bellamy a bizarre fanboy letter that blathered on about the dangerous power of art. Citing Lenin and Trotsky no less, Beck stated "The youth rises up, power structures crumble, and worse leaders are inserted", and contended that he and Bellamy probably had much more in common politically than the Muse frontman would care to admit, and that "I will still play your songs loudly."

I'm writing this column in October, for the December issue. I have no way of knowing whether we're three-quarters screwed or totally screwed, but I'm not one to argue that the worse things get, the greater the possibility for revolutionary change. However, the full catastrophe of the November elections is still ahead, meaning that I have to tread water until then. But its actually not hard to figure out why wingnut Republicans secretly, or not so secretly, yearn for the music of the likes of RATM and Muse, despite the left leanings of those musicians.

Now, it might be a bit simplistic to categorize whole types of music as either Democratic or Republican (rock = Democratic, country = Republican, hip hop = Democratic, etc.). If we go by which musicians have endorsed Romney versus Obama however, one reason quickly becomes clear. Anne Kiplinger, in her humorous October 13, 2012 Music Mom blog "Obama or Romney? Let the musicians decide!" on ChicagoNow.com, contends that "Romney has about 8 supporters in the music industry and Obama literally has all the rest, so it wouldn't even be a fair fight." In the Romney camp, she identifies Donnie and Marie Osmond, Gene Simmons, Kid Rock, Ted Nugent, Pat Boone, Trace Adkins, The Oak Ridge Boys, and Hank Williams Jr. (Megadeth's brain addled singer Dave Mustaine can be included in this group.) In Obama's camp, she provides the following, partial list: *"Marc Anthony, Jeff Beck, Mary J. Blige, Jon Bon Jovi, David Byrne, Colbie Caillat, Mariah Carey, Cher, Common, El Debarge, Earth, Wind & Fire, Gloria Estefan, Foo Fighters, Ben Folds, Peter Frampton, Lady Gaga, Al Green, Cee Lo Green, Josh Groban, Buddy Guy, Herbie Hancock, Jennifer Hudson, Mick Jagger, Quincy Jones, R. Kelly, Alicia Keys, B.B. King, Carole King, Beyoncé Knowles, Jay-Z, Cyndi Lauper, John Legend, Adam Levine, Ludacris, Joel Madden, Madonna, Chris Martin, Ricky Martin, Dave Matthews, Bette Midler, Nicki Minaj, Moby, Janelle Monáe, Jason Mraz, Ne-Yo, Randy Newman, Katy Perry, Pink, Pitbull, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Kelly Rowland, Snoop Dogg, Gwen Stefani, Barbra Streisand, Trey Songz, James Taylor, Toni Tennille, Justin Timberlake, Usher, Eddie Vedder, Pete Wentz, will.i.am and Stevie Wonder."*

If I were Republican, I'd sooner slit my wrists than confine my popular music listening to the meager list of sad sack musicians who have endorsed Mitt Romney for president.

There's another reason, of course. Republicans, especially younger Republicans, fancy themselves as rebels against a supposed liberal establishment, a liberal media, and a liberal culture. Whether or not there's any objective truth to this characterization of the status quo, these Republican "rebels without a clue" thus tend to identify with rebellious music and rebellious musicians. Unfortunately for said Republicans, rebellious music and rebellious musicians often incline toward the left end of the political spectrum. So, Paul Ryan wants to mosh to RATM's thunderous metal rap, while ignoring the band's commie lyrics. And Glenn Beck wants to crowd surf while Muse noodles away at their alt-rock, while putting a rightwing spin to the group's left anarcho lyrics.

The human capacity to see what we want to see, hear what we want to hear, and think what we want to think, despite mountains of facts, even all of reality, to the contrary, is endless.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called Fim in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.

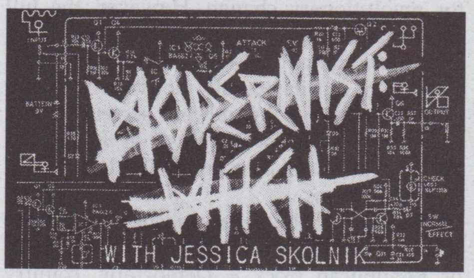
I recently had the chance to see two good punk documentaries at the local "Sound Unseen" film festival. First up was *The Rise and Fall of the Clash*, which was fascinating because it was really about the "fall" of the CLASH. As I noted a few months ago, the CLASH was one of the very first punk bands I got into as a kid and will always be very special to me. I think their first two LPs and singles have held up very well, and their later career has quite a few good tracks sprinkled across several LPs. This documentary was interesting to me because it focused on the band's later years when they were very successful commercially, but managed to go downhill and disintegrate in a short period of time. To many of us at the time, their disintegration was about them getting their just deserts for having sold out punk music to the mainstream. However, the viewpoint of this documentary is that after *Combat Rock* they were poised to become super stars alongside the WHO, the ROLLING STONES and the BEATLES and suddenly dropped off the Radar. Ultimately, I think Joe Strummer, like his hero Woody Guthrie, could never really reconcile his punk/radical roots and publicly espoused views, with the tension of being a successful rock star. The movie mostly seems to blame Bernie Rhodes (and less Paul Simenon) for mismanaging the band and fuelling the personality conflict between Strummer and Jones. The film rightly points to Mick Jones being ousted as splitting up the band's creative collaborators, leaving the band adrift. That said, Mick Jones musical experimentation had already led the band far from its punk roots. It's interesting that this film interviews all the

musicians who came in after Mick Jones left and comprised the final line up. This is the line-up toured and recorded in 1984 and '85 producing the *Cut the Crap* LP. I don't think this era of the band has ever been taken very seriously by anyone, so it's interesting to see this period of the band and its final dissolution given some serious examination. That said, by 1985 most people had rejected or forgotten the CLASH.

Next up is *Bad Brains a Band In DC*. As I've noted before I am from DC originally and the BAD BRAINS are probably my second favorite band of all time (after DISCHARGE). This movie was pretty good; it did a good job of documenting the band's early days, their impact on hardcore and popular music in general, their later more commercial efforts, and their ongoing career to the present day. The movie starts and ends with footage from the band's 2007 tour, with some painful to watch footage of the now clearly mentally unstable HR. I could have lived without any of this footage, but there is a great deal from the band's early days that makes it worthwhile. Just about everyone you would expect is interviewed (John Joseph, Harley, Jimmy Gestapo, Ian and Henry, Dave Grohl, the BEASTIE BOYS, dudes from RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS etc.) and the parts of the story lacking corresponding footage are filled in with pretty decent cartoons telling the story in kind of a comic book fashion. Most of the early footage we have already seen before, but it's interesting to get some context from many of the people involved, especially the band members. All in all, this movie is well done and worth checking out.

There's also a new documentary about Boston Hardcore out, *All Ages*, and I can't wait to see it.

A few more quick thoughts, this is more like record label/distro guy complaints, but here goes. First, if you run a label or distro, please reconsider going back to putting your address on your website/records/email signature. I know everything is on facebook now, but I spend a surprising amount of time these days just trying to find a mailing address for a label or distro and get several parcels a year returned because I sent a parcel to the "same address as last time" only to find the recipient had moved. Second, I wrote about record packing and shipping a while back, but one thing I've noticed is a lot of labels now ship the records separate from the jackets in bulk. While it's common to do this for small orders, it's frustrating for a distributor to open up a parcel and then have to sort out covers from vinyl and assemble them all. Invariably, I wind up with either not enough vinyl or covers, as whoever packed it counted them up wrong. Furthermore, the LP covers have a tendency to get crushed when shipped separate from the vinyl, unless packed up very well. This is especially true of the thin Eastern European LP covers. Also, now that tons of labels are charging $10 or more wholesale for LPs, how come we still don't get plastic sleeves with them? A lot of the damage from shipping could be eliminated if the records were placed in plastic sleeves, yet so many labels skimp on this. Another thing I would like to see is more labels and distributors mailing each other checks like back in the day, instead of paypal. Keeping Ebay/Paypal and merchant bankers out of DIY hardcore is pretty much a win/win if people can get back into the habit of writing and mailing checks or money orders.



"You're so strong," they say, with admiration. "You've overcome so much. You're such a fighter."

Those of us who have, are or will endure intense emotional and/or physical pain, the kind of things people write stories and songs and make films about from outside because it cuts through to the core of the Human Experience or whatever—we are unique. Not that all such things are equal: cancer is not rape is not addiction is not racist violence is not bullying, because of your gender and/or sexuality is not intense poverty is not mental illness and so forth, though of course many of these issues intersect.

It is inspiring to read such stories when we are within the guts of such fighting ourselves. It is a reminder that we too can hold on however much we want to give up, a reminder to be kind to ourselves. But strength porn is dangerous. When someone is said to be strong, it is implied that we do not need support, that we do not need love, that we can do all of this on our own. That we are so strong we are beyond human necessity. But we are not.

I know I have spent a very long time cursing myself for not being strong enough, for needing to reach out, for wanting to be vulnerable despite my thick and necessary carapace, for having that carapace in the first place, for not being good enough, for not being the Perfect Beautiful Hero.

Strength is not always desirable. It is often a necessity, and that is a very different thing. But it is difficult, and it means that you spend a lot of time navigating complicated and dark waters and sometimes not being a terribly pleasant person, especially if you are being hurt or otherwise hurting at that very moment. To the people who are close to me, to the people I love: I try to be the best person I can, because they do the same for me. I try to explain. It's been hard for me to let go of the idea that I need to explain the prickly underbelly of strength, the self-protection thing, to everyone, even people who treat me with no respect at all.

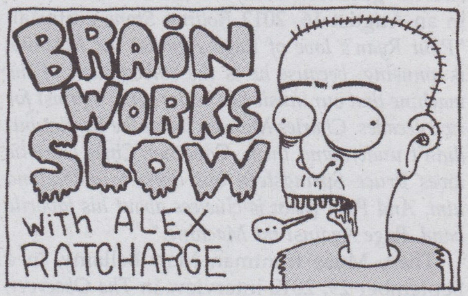
Strength is not one-dimensional. It does not negate pain, though it helps you work through it. It does not always change your circumstances when so many things are beyond your control. What it does is help you survive. It ebbs and flows. It's not always there when you reach for it. It doesn't mean that healing is complete or discrete.

There are some kinds of strength that are more respected than others. Take a look at the Strong Black Woman trope to see how strength is often employed (in racialized and gendered dimension) in order to dismiss the humanity and understanding of an entire group of people. It's repulsive. When we claim strength, when we read narratives of strength, we must keep all of this in mind: who is being praised? Who is being demonized? What are the characteristics that are found admirable, and what are the characteristics that are condemned?

Surviving pain, illness, trauma: it is not a linear thing, as I have written in this space before. It is messy, difficult to comprehend even from the inside (let alone from the outside), all about getting through to the next day. You may not agree with every tactic someone takes to get through—but it should all be respected, in its infinite complicated nature.

Often people don't really like a fighter. The same people who praise me for being strong will ask why I won't shut up about the same topics, will call me annoying, will call me alienating.

This is what strength porn has done to us. We use others for their "inspiration" and discard who they truly are and the realities they face. Someone in the depths of these struggles needs—well, we don't all need the same individual things. What we need is to be listened to.



There was a time in my life where political correctness seemed to make sense, but it's gone now and I don't see it coming back. It's as if I have lost my political virginity, and I can more or less trace it back to a few precise events, major disappointments, endless arguments and squat wars… I feel like I always rant about squats when I write, but really these places were to my late teenage years and early twenties what high school was to the years prior… Places to learn, experiment, confront viewpoints and meet other beatniks and bozos. Good soundtrack too, but that's beside the point. Looking back, it's been a mad ride…

There was a squatted street in Paris in the first half of the '00s, it was called a bunch of different names, the 612, the RDC, can't remember all of 'em now… It was this crazy place where one building was squatted by the most insane chaos

punks, another by autonomous radical groups, another by Rastafarian drug dealers (and by drug dealers, I don't mean they were selling pot) and so on, and all these people were high all the time, all these people had an attitude problem, all of 'em were doing something illegal every day for breakfast. They would organize gigs and call them "ACAB festivals" or "ANTI COP NIGHT", and you might think "whatever, I've seen tons of punk records with anti-cop songs, etc" but that was a different story altogether—these guys were at war with the police, in a very real way. They would paste posters in the streets surrounding the squat, and these posters would feature giant pictures of dead cops, faces covered with blood, and of course the cops from the neighborhood were furious about it, so they'd see red and show up at every single show to get their revenge, beat the shit out of the audience, throw teargas, arrest whoever they could, the usual stuff cops do during demos, except this was no demo, just daily routine for misanthropic squatters.

One of my old bands played a buncha shows there, it was always the most insane atmosphere, passed out junkies on the floor, zombie-looking ex-punks, young homeless kids, some creepy as fuck old lady endlessly banging on a garbage can… Then, as you'd go out of the place, you'd see her standing next to one of the guys who organized the show, surrounded by cops, and she'd be yelling at them, "Fuck yeah, put that motherfucker in jail, he tried to sell me smack yesterday!" and before you could even realize what was happening, the guy would punch her in the face right in front of the cops, so the men in blue would jump on both of them and take them away. Another time, some junkies were playing video games on the third floor of one of the buildings; the sound was super loud so some poor deadhead yelled at them to turn it down… Poor guy… He couldn't know that the junkies had been shitting in a plastic bag for days, too lazy to use the bathroom, and he surely couldn't know that they would use their own shit as ammo to answer his plea for calm… Junkies excrement thrown out the window, how's that for a punk show? And standing in the middle of the chaos, I loved every minute of it because it made me feel alive, it was so much different from what I was being sold as "real life"…

At the time I think I would have patiently listened to any viewpoint as long as it was unusual enough, so of course I ended up being interested in the most radical "political thinkers" hanging in these circles… But more often than not, it turned out that these "thinkers" were just pissed off lost kids trying to get some attention, trying to find a target for their hate. What a crazy mix… On one side you'd get the über political kids, on the other you'd get the "don't give a fuck" punks, and all these people were trying to build their own lives in the same spaces, convinced they knew the one and only truth… Reminds me of something that happened once on that island I used to live on… I was hanging on the sidewalk outside a show and witnessed some argument between some people I vaguely knew. "You can't draw swastikas in my house!" yelled an older activist dude to a young teenage punk, all charged up with nowhere to go, one of these kids you usually see at shows for just a few months, spiky hair, full metal jacket, snotty and ready to fight but above all lost and confused, of course, as any psychiatrist would say—but punks aren't good psychiatrists, as you probably know… Anyway, turned out that the kid had entered a party he hadn't been invited to, and then proceeded to spray-paint good old dicks and swastikas in the host's room… And of course it turned out the host was Jewish, and of course controversy ensued. And there I was, trying to talk sense out of these people.

"Fuck man, he's just a kid, leave him alone, I'm sure he didn't even know you were Jewish…"

"Of course he did! What difference does it make, anyway? Look at this fuckin' asshole laughing! He's a fucking nazi, that's what he is!"

Yeah, the kid was laughing. He was also quite drunk, so this might explain that. Anyway, after much yelling and threatening the two parties came to an agreement—the kid would go back to the house, apologize to everyone involved, and cover his graffiti. Cool? Well, sort of… Later than night I talked to him and he said that the reason he had done it was because he hated those people, because a few weeks before one of his best friends killed himself because of them. I knew said friend… I had met him a few times and was aware of his passing, he was a young bloke too, same kind of guy, and he had been "excluded from the community" by some uptight assholes who couldn't take his bad humor… You might think it's exaggerated to say someone has been "excluded from a community" but it was true in that case; this happened in a small city of a small country, y'know? If the powers that be at punk shows decided someone needed to be banned, all they needed to do was get the word around to all their friends who organized shows and parties, and that was it…

Sad story all around, but my point is that anyone in their right mind would have given that kid a break, but not a member of the PC crowd, because their crusade against everything that was not PC enough in this world was more important than everything else. You know, the sight of a thirty-something activist type calling a sixteen year old drunk punk a "nazi" because he drew a dick and a swastika on a wall would have been pretty funny, if it hadn't been this dramatic… I mean, what kind of nazi would mix the symbol of his proud racist sentiments with a crude doodle representing the male genital parts? Find the answer by yourself, punk. At first the plan was to tell you about the time a feminist commando interrupted the first gig by one of my old bands to protest a suggestive picture one of us had drawn on the wall of a squat, but it's deadline day so that story will have to wait. Listen to the Télédétente 666 7" on Sweet Rot, the Noir Boy George demotape, new Kitchen's Floor on NGL, Dicks reissues, Deformity 7" on LVEUM, etc, all great stuff. Oi. The end.

MINDLESS CONTENTMENT
WITH CHUCK BARRELS

I'll be the first to admit I was wrong about something. And something I was wrong about is Youth Attack records. For a spell there, Youth Attack was a dirty word, the place where "Mysterious Guy Hardcore" was born and bred, where all the bands sounded and looked the same. But I was wrong. Sure, it's not all great, but there's some really good shit on the label. VILE GASH. SUBURBANITE. ROPES. ROPES. Yeah, ROPES. I was late to the game on this one, another error I'll freely admit, and finally got hip to the REPOS just as they were playing their last show in Chicago somewhere. I made up ground on the REPOS discography and laid in wait for the ROPES to pounce. Their self-titled 7" reminded me more of the DWARVES or DIRTYS in its rockier moments, but the drug fueled hardcore was still there as well. I *almost* got to see them play in Cleveland, but at least scored the *Cleveland Demo* cassette, which turned out to be one of my most listened to releases of last year. A few killer originals and the best DEAD BOYS cover I've heard since the REATARDS (broken up with a killer Jerry Lawler/Austin Idol promo as well) completely endeared them to me.

Every tape and record that has come since is golden, and their LP is one of my most anticipated releases currently coming up the pike. Somehow I managed to make contact with their guitar player Joe, a good guy from what I've noticed, and he agreed to answer some questions for this column. And he's not kidding about sending out digital files of ROPES music. Contact him through this site: rjpjr.tumblr.com and he'll hook it up and you'll also see some stuff that makes up what ROPES are all about: guns, women and rock'n'roll. God bless these guys. I'll be back with some record talk next time or maybe another interview with a guitarist from some band, since this seems to be becoming a trend. And since you asked, I'm rooting for the Nats to take it all, fuck every other MLB team not from Cleveland. And I'd also like to say FUCK YOU GARY BETTMAN.

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What's the status of the Ropes LP at this point? Recorded/still recording? Is it all new stuff, or are you redoing any of the songs from the demo tapes?

RJP: The LP is recorded and mixed. Trying to piece it together at the moment. Side A is sequenced, pretty much what you'd expect from us at this point I think. Head out on a country road with a full tank of gas and another gallon in the passenger seat to party with. Rip

a couple grams of whatever, cut the lights and floor it. Side B is kinda different from stuff we've done before and I'm actually doing some sequencing between sentences here. Expect all original songs, no covers. Seventeen songs total, two of which are from the Cleveland tape. Typically I think it's a bad idea for bands to re-record songs, but these two truly came out better than what was on the demo. We actually re-recorded more from that tape but scrapped it from the album because the originals were better. So yeah, all but two of the songs are new, unreleased up until now.

Speaking of demos, Ropes have released at least four tapes already. How do you feel about the resurgence of bands releasing stuff on cassette? Do you think it limits the amount of people who might hear your music, or do you think it might actually separate the wheat from the chaff as far as the audience goes?

RJP: I think very few people will argue that cassettes are the ideal format, but they do serve a purpose. They're affordable and can be manufactured quickly. This is the reason we are releasing tapes. When I know we have an out of town weekend coming up, we can record songs a week before, order the tapes and dub them the day of the show if need be. The Chaos in Tejas tapes (aka *Vietnam II*) were duplicated in the motel room between shows. We don't need to invest the time and money like with a 7", and risk the pressing plant not having records ready, screwed up test pressings, etc. And we have a continuous flow of material out there. Sometimes it's good to just jump in feet first with the idea, let it all hang out, put it on tape and see what happens. If the thing turns out to be a clunker and nobody wants it, I didn't sink a months rent into it, so no big deal. Some may argue that we could do the same thing with CD-Rs, but it's a personal choice and I just don't like CDs, never have.

Personally, I like tapes. They're not my preferred format, but I still like them. I bought them as a kid, and I still have a tape deck in my van. Craig, our drummer, has boxes of them. The Repos released demo tapes too, so it's not like it's a new thing for us. I don't think tapes are some kind of exclusive or elite format that only certain people listen to, but maybe I'm wrong. They definitely don't make it any harder for people to hear the music. All of our stuff has been ripped to music blogs within hours of release. And I'm fine with it. I understand people listen to music on ipods and their phones or whatever now, and no one has been denied digital files of our releases. Anyone who wants to hear Ropes music can send me an email and I will send them a link to the files.

As far as the "demos", were *Always Nothing* or *Vietnam II* conceived as just tape releases without any plans for them going beyond that? I can see how Cleveland fits the demo description (rougher versions of songs that were re-recorded for an LP), but I guess *Always Nothing* or *Vietnam II* might almost stand alone? Could they end up on vinyl at some point as well?

RJP: The tapes were made to generate revenue for out of town trips. It may sound gross or whatever, but yeah, it's a great way to have a steady stream of material out there and put gas in the tank. The money from the gate ain't shit for the most part, so putting these sorta exclusive tapes together for our out of town shows helps us survive. And then the people who came and saw us get a cheap and rare souvenir with all new songs. The last two tapes may or may not be issued on vinyl at some point, we really haven't discussed it. If Mark wants to put them out as a 7" or a 12" with all the demos or something, he has my blessing. There're a couple songs from those I'd like to re-record, but who knows.

I guess the part about tapes providing a limited audience point I was moving towards, is that I think a lot of people don't even have tape decks. So in order to appreciate these releases you know someone is at least making the effort to seek out and be into the band; to actually listen to an old format that requires vintage equipment. Could be a reach on my part though, I'll admit. I will say that I do admire your willingness to distribute the music freely in digital format (and I've benefitted from that myself), something not everyone has given into yet. I think bands will need to have your attitude about sharing music, not necessarily in a "can't beat 'em, join way", but in the way that it's another easy avenue to get your music out there and an important one at that. Honestly, I own *Demo II* on tape, vinyl and MP3 (if one owns them), and I listened to the MP3s the most, because that's what I'm playing in the car where I listen to at least half or more of my music. Maybe free MP3s aren't going to kill a small underground band's record sales. Feel free to comment on any of that, if that's even possible.

RJP: I'm definitely not trying to make our music any less accessible than it already is by releasing it on cassette. The music we make will never appeal to a massive audience, so I absolutely do not want to alienate the few that enjoy and support it. I've made WAV files available for those who ask because if someone wants to hear it they should, and it doesn't take any money out of my pocket to do so.

Do you think Ropes music is good for driving to?

RJP: Personally, I don't really listen to music when I drive. Usually, I like to listen to talk radio and daydream; space out. If NPR is playing smooth Jazz or I can only find sports talk on AM, I like to bounce around the classic rock stations. On the road the band listens to comedy tapes almost exclusively. Richard Pryor and Steve Martin are the top faves, but we celebrate all of the classics and even some of the new stuff.

I think the tour tapes idea is great and well explained on your part. It's easy to understand how the *Cleveland Demo* came to be named as such. How did the latest one come to be titled *Vietnam II*? Does it have something to do with the Chajos in Tejas experience?

RJP: When we did the Ohio shows, Columbus and Cleveland, we didn't have anything to sell, so we thought it would be a good idea to make a tape with some originals and some covers. There were so many bands we wanted to cover; DEVO, PAGANS, INTEGRITY, FACE VALUE, and more I can't remember. We ended up doing the DEAD BOYS cover, we did a NEW BOMB TURKS cover that we ended up not releasing and the JAMES GANG cover which ended up on the next tape. For the Texas shows I wanted to do "Precious and Grace" by ZZ TOP but we couldn't get it together in time so we threw the BUTTHOLE SURFERS thing together at the last minute with me playing drums and Aaron playing bass.

Chaos in Tejas was not a great experience, but I would like to do it again, just differently. We planned it poorly and it ended up being kind of a drag when it was all said and done. If we were ever to play again I would rather show up on Thursday, play as much as possible over the weekend and get to actually hang out and have some fun. The driving and lack of sleep was a major bummer, but the shows were cool

What New Bomb Turks song did you cover?

RJP: "I Want My Baby…Dead"

***Destroy Oh Boy!* was such a ripper when it came out. It's faster than a lot of hardcore records, and a good pick for you guys. I wanted to mention something about your choice in covers. It's so much more interesting hearing you guys play say, a JAMES GANG song than just covering another "hardcore" band. I don't imagine many other bands on Youth Attack are listening to NEW BOMB TURKS or am I wrong?**

RJP: I hope our contemporaries are listening to the NEW BOMB TURKS, JAMES GANG, DEAD BOYS, PAGANS, BUTTHOLE SURFERS and all the other good stuff out there. If not they're missing out. And we cover hardcore songs at our shows; CRO-MAGS, INTEGRITY and other obvious ones to get some cheap heat going...I was going to say why would we record some classic hardcore song and release it—then I remembered *the repos did* do a song-for-song cover of a whole YOUTH OF TODAY album. Oops. Forgot about that.

I should ask you about Youth Attack—how did you get hooked up with Mark McCoy? Do you think there's a certain YA aesthetic that you guys fit into?

RJP: We've known Mark for close to twenty years and consider him a friend. He's been a supporter 100% of whatever we want to do ever since the Repos demo. As far as a "Youth Attack" aesthetic, of course there is one, and it's whatever Mark wants it to be. I guess by definition we fit into it, because Mark is only releasing music he likes and he's typically doing the artwork for his releases. And I love that. Let us concentrate on making the music, and I can trust Mark will put it in a package that looks cool and is timeless. The guy can sleep on my couch anytime he wants and I would even drive him to the airport if he asked.

What's in the future for the Ropes? Do you guys have a five-year plan? Any time frame

we should look for the LP in?
RJP: No real plans, expect the album out by early 2013, East Coast tour has been discussed. Probably won't be too active for the rest of 2012. Still playing the lottery, so when I hit the jackpot expect a West Coast tour and a steady stream of affordable vinyl releases. Hoping that happens in the next year or two.

The Ropes Discography:
Demo cassette (self-released – 40 copies) Repressed on Yakuzzi Tapes – (150?)
Self Titled 7" (self-released – 200 black, 100 clear) Repressed on Youth Attack with different art (500 red)
Demo II cassette with zine (self-released "Cleveland Demo" – 100 copies)
Demo II 7" RSD edition (Youth Attack – 300 copies)
Always Nothing cassette (Youth Attack – 300 copies)
Vietnam II cassette with zine (self-released for Chaos in Tejas tour – 100 copies)
Forthcoming:
Vietnam II cassette repress (Youth Attack)
Demo II 7" repress (Youth Attack – 200 copies)
Lost Still Losing LP (Youth Attack)
Sick Club 7" (Cowabunga records)

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

Five years—like Stalin's agricultural drives, or Maos Great Leap Forward, I have progressed, over this half-a-decade, in much the same, clunky, horrific ways as those ill-fated Red programs. This column has seen me as a Young Man, fresh out of Warkrime and with a fat belly full of booze and bile, to a lean, bone-thin, drug dog popping, snorting, parachuting and plugging my sweaty way through every entry in the Pharma-handbook, back to normal (if a bit dehydrated), then fat again and now as fit as I'll ever be, though not from dope or speed but from plain, boring sit-ups and health food. I have fucked my way through this life; I have shit my way here. And here I am, 23 years old as of last week, in my room, at my desk, shirtless, worthless, but here.

Now, my absence these past few months may have confused my readers, and for that I offer as much apology as I can muster. You know, it's funny; when I first started writing this column, I was seldom late. Oh, there were months here and there when I was a little behind, but even for the years (two of them!) when I didn't have a computer, and wrote all my columns by hand for later transcription (done by one of my secretaries) on one of the top-of-the-line (circa 1998) *MRR* computers, I still finished, if not before the deadline, not too long after. But, as Plato once quipped to a grape-feeding catamite shortly before falling asleep in a sunbeam, "Things change." Oh, what words!

But enough of dead Grecians. I'll cut through the gristle and get to the meat: I've come a long way, in terms of time if not maturity, but all the same it's interesting to see how some things can change so dramatically while others just change costume and resume their place at the table. Really, it has been a long while since *MRR*s Top Brit, Layla Gibbon, and the more ferocious members of her hand-picked cabal cornered me in the back room of that Oakland warehouse, chains and flick-knives shifting from greasy palm to sweaty hand and slit-eyes staring granite-hard at my flabbergasted face (Aspiring columnists take note: that is your first lesson on how to overwrite/misuse alliteration in the most embarrassing, blatant way). I stammered out a yes, though in truth I was responding to more of a demand rather than a question. And, here, five years to the month later, I sit, back straining from years of being planted in this uncomfortable wooden chair, eyes red from staring at this screen for far too many months. And still in the same apartment, though in a different, much smaller (and cheaper) room, but at least it has its own "office" (a semi-refurbished—if pictures of naked women and jokestore vomit tacked to the walls constitutes furbishing) and a bed and a stereo. And now, of course, my youthful enthusiasm having been slowly replaced with an early-twenties malaise, I am of course many weeks late in turning in this column.

That stereo…the music on it, I have to say, hasn't changed as much as you might think. Having long languished in that anti-intellectual ghetto marked Hardcore for most of my teen years, I shouldn't have been surprised when the other inmates balked at my attempts to escape. True, I did play in a hardcore band for quite a while; true, I did have a shaved head and motorcycle boots, complete with chains and all that (even shirts without sleeves, at one point), but I thankfully got over that dreadful bit of necrophilia-fashion once my brain worked itself up to half-speed. I never solely listened to hardcore; those that haven't sold their copies for gum-money can look at the insert for the first Warkrime 7" and look at my now-stolen Soft White Underbelly t-shirt (the SWU was, of course, the original name for the Blue Oyster Cult, who have a million songs better than that one about the Reaper). I have always maintained that moderation is the key to healthy living; even in music. In fact, especially where music is concerned. If you notice, all those who drop completely off the face of the punk-planet are those who spend every minute breathing, drinking, and droning on and on about *punk punk punk*. Is it any surprise when you run into them a few years later and they're all about *accounting accounting accounting*? The observant out there might have a clue as to what I'm talking about; those shaking their heads will find out soon enough.

It seems stupid, now, that I once got mad when baldheaded little dorks would accuse me of "abandoning hardcore" and becoming some "garage rock hipster." One of the more vocal in this crowd once berated me outside an Annilhiation Time show at this awful bar, the Parkside, out here. I choked him against a wall until he cried uncle, but didn't spit when he scampered away. I was furious; garage rock, what? Because of Wild Thing? That band hardly sounded like the fucking Blues Magoos or the Black Lips. Now, of course, that little kid is a little man, and he wears fifteen necklaces and cowboy boots, acts like Johnny Blunders and brings shame to anyone who's ever worn a bolo tie (full disclosure: I have two bolos, and once had a third). I breathed easier once I stopped letting these cretins get under my skin; who gives a shit what some rich-boy from the East Bay thinks about my life? I'm still mystified that anyone besides my roommates would care in the slightest about what kind of music I spend my time listening to, or what kind of leather boots I'm wearing this year. It's been a couple of years since I could truly get worked up about some nerd who thinks I'm Nobunny…and I fear this means that I, too, am growing up.

My columns have changed in tone, too. That's not bragging; in my honest opinion they have gotten slightly worse, affected in a hard way by my recent busy schedule. I go to work, as a florist of course, and attend Community College almost every day of the week; by the time I get back to my basement apartment, I am too brain-dead and bored with being awake, that I can't sit down and tap out two thousands words of bile and swill. That is my roundabout explanation for my recent absence. If you could only see the god-awful crap I've typed, read over, cried about and declined to send these past few months, your already likely rock-bottom opinion of me would break the earth's crust and disrupt tectonic plates from here to Haiti. Not that this column is any sort of "return to form"; mostly my form has been half-hearted complaints of boo-hoo-life's-so-hard (for a middling-class White Male!) or Look-At-Me-I'm-High-As-Hell, interrupted by occasional, accidental prescience or pointlessness. That, or my reminding readers that I came up with Mysterious Guy Hardcore (now the most common tag-word for $1.99 buy-it-nows on Ebay!). My fan mail has come from one man; he is no longer allowed to write to the magazine, and, in fact, the Prison that he resides in has suspended his letter-writing activities for quite a while (someday, when I'm low on ideas but high on Dexadrine, I'll transcribe his rather colorful Clockwork-Orangean S&M-then-death fuck fantasy revolving around yours truly, and run it as my column). I was originally drafted to write a column because I'm a loudmouth who had become well-known as a pot-stirring man-child; now I'm known as a whiney brat who'll probably overdose on his own ego if he doesn't get locked up for complaining too much first.

But maybe that won't happen at all. After all, I've changed in more ways than just declining as

a writer. I shut up a lot more now, and just look, instead of doing my old *look at me* shtick. This, I fear, is a mistake. Instead of dumbly ignoring everything but my own words and mouth, I now have to hear the awful, terrible things that people say and think. Worse, I even see what people do. Even I, sinner as I am, don't deserve this. From hearing my coworker say, all in one day, that not only is there a difference between blacks and "niggers", but that the rascal in the White House is not only a Muslim ("He just looks Muslim, you know?") but is, in fact, a Communist sleeper-agent hatched in Kenya! My coworker! A male florist! But that's not the worst of it. In my Community College music class, I get to hear Viseyewelle (pronounced "Visual") expound upon the uselessness of having to learn notes and melodies, because all people want to hear is just that "fuckin beat, you know?" (My 70-year-old teacher did not, in fact, know). I hang my head and report sadly that I am no longer astounded, amazed, or even saddened by the things I observer each and ever day. I am now just frightened, and that fear has colored my life in more ways than I care to count.

Christ, I offer three hail marys and a month of penance-yard-work for that awful digression above, but I had to get it all off my chest, to excise it completely. Forgive the herk-y-jerky way that I dealt with such trivialities like sentence structure, paragraph structure, or column structure; I have been on sabbatical, and the old brain isn't running at top speed yet. The five-year-fatigue, they call it up at the *MRR* Rest Home for Retired Lesbians (its one resident, Mykel Board, assured me that I would soon overcome it and become just as successful and well-liked as him). It may not seem like it from the whining session above, but I have broadened my horizons rather considerably since I started my career as the Last Punk (by the way, to all those who have taken seriously, and consequently been offended by that little royal title: You are, all three of you, idiots, completely). I was struck by a phrase, several years ago, a phrase that has stuck with me through wines, women and withdrawals: "Build for the ruins".

Like most Jews, I am scared to death of dying. That old inexorable, inevitable fate escaped only by the Frozen Rich in their icy tubes (say hello to the future, Mr. Disney!), the old common denominator, Death, looms heavy above my Hebrew scalp. Even immortals die; think of the Greek Gods, or the Norse ones, or, according to that paragon of truth and morality that is Time magazine, the Judeo-Christian one. Every living thing, all of God's chillums gotta die. But immortality can be achieved, if not by the body, but by the brain. Or, rather, it's droppings and scat. My goal, if not with this column but with other ventures, which I'll leave up to you to figure out or hunt down, is to achieve a modicum of long-life. I have a nagging, honest doubt that I'm Ernest Hemmingway, or Celine, or even Ponce de Leon, but I hope to someday be something, it doesn't much matter what, that says some word that people remember. This is bare truth; embarrassing truth. Proof of my neurosis, an absolute baring of the Ego. But it's honest, as honest as my fear of being hit by a car tomorrow morning and only leaving these few words to remember me by. I don't care if it's self-serving egotism. It's the truth, and I'm sticking to it.

"Of course it's an all ages show," I explain to Bill, our driver, merch guy, videographer and all around trouble-shooter for the evening's show in Toronto a few years back, "how else are we going to be able to hit on 16 year olds?"

"Hey," says Michael, our drummer of Furious George, "don't include me in your 'we' when you are talking about stuff like that. I mean, maybe you and Steve...."

"Steve?" asks Bill as he drives his mini-van through the Holland Tunnel, with Michael next to him in the front passenger seat. I, of course, am laying down in the very back of the vehicle. My spot.

"He's our new bassist," I yell to Bill over his blaring car stereo, "the one we are picking up at the rest stop. Where his father is dropping him off."

"How old is he again?" Michael asks.

"Eighteen," I reply.

"That's kinda young," says Bill as he struggles to read the road signs that will point him to the Jersey Turnpike. Bill is legally blind.

"Old enough to play the punk rock," I explain to Bill, "plus he'll obey."

"Uh huh," says Bill as he makes a quick right, then left, then right, all within two seconds.

"Really," I say, "plus he's damn good looking."

"Yeah," says Michael, "you're just saying that because he looks exactly like you."

"No he doesn't," I protest. But five minutes later, I am proven wrong.

We arrive at some restaurant parking lot right off the highway and are immediately greeted by Steve and his Dad. Steve is dressed in a black denim jacket, black women's stretch jeans, a black t-shirt and has bleached blonde hair.

"He's your fucking twin," says Bill after shaking Steve's and his father's hand.

"No he's not," I say as I stare at my doppleganger, "he's at least two inches shorter than me."

"He looks the same size to me," says Michael.

"It's because I slouch," I tell my dopey drummer. "Uh huh," he replies.

I then explain to Steve's father that the trip to Toronto shouldn't take more than eight hours and that we'll have his son back the following afternoon. Or early evening, at the latest.

"So you'll take good care of my son," he says.

I smile, tell him I will and promise not to deliver him home in a shopping cart, drunk.

Steve's father thanks me and gives us all a box of Duncan Donuts.

As we pull away in Bill's mini-van, he waves to us and tells us to have fun.

Five minutes later Steve tells us it's a good thing the gig was that evening and not during the past week.

"Why?" asks Michael.

"Because I was grounded," he says. Doh.

***

As we make our way to the great white north with our new bass player and blind driver, Michael and I discuss the direction of the band.

"I think we should tour more and record a new album," he says.

"Yeah!" exclaims Steve, from the middle bench he has all to himself in the mini-van, "That sounds great. How about it, George?"

I tell them both it sounds like fun, but we gotta start making more money. That this punk rock stuff is making me broke. That the show we were to play in Toronto that evening will cost me about as much as the phone bills I have just from calling and confirming the show.

"Well, you didn't have to call him every two seconds," explains Bill.

"I did if we wanted that free hotel room," I say.

"Well then it's not really free, is it?" says Michael.

Drummers.

About an hour later I wake up from a small nap with drool hanging from my lip. And a small pool of saliva near my head, on my guitar case. I awake because of the yelling going on in the front of the van.

"He did what?" yells Michael, laughing his ass off. "Her," says Bill, "that night."

"Who did who?" I manage to ask, spitting all over the place.

"Dude," says Steve, "you just got me all wet."

I ignore the youngster and again ask Michael and Bill who they are talking about.

"Some chick fucked the bassist for Penis Patrol and right before that, she blew some guy for two packs of cigarettes," explained Bill.

"Wow," says Steve.

"Geez," I say, "I'd have only offered her one pack."

Nobody laughs. Except for Steve. I really begin to like the kid.

As the ride progresses, we talk about Canada and what a stupid country it really is. We bitch about how it is retarded that we will have to exchange our money, for theirs, which is worthless and how all Canadians say "eh?" and "right?" all the time.

We also talk about their women. And I say that at least girls in Canada are clean.

"Last time I toured there," I explain, "I

fucked this really hot chick who shaved everywhere."

"Even her mustache?" asks Michael.

"Shut-up, pussy," I say to my drummer.

"Did she shave her clit?" asks Steve.

I look at him, then at Michael. Michael looks at Steve, then at me. Steve looks at me, then at Michael. Michael looks at Bill, then back at me. Bill looks at the road signs, wondering what they say.

"Dude," I start.

"Don't tell him," says Michael.

"Yeah," agrees Bill.

"Tell me what?" asks Steve, confused.

"Nothing," I say.

Ya gotta love the kids.

***

Eleven hours after telling Steve's dad that it would take us eight hours, we arrive at the Canada border. We got a bit lost near Buffalo and almost resorted to asking Amish people for directions. But they looked scary in their little hats with their horse drawn carts. Plus, some of the kids wore little black capes with hoods and looked like midget Grim Reapers.

"Okay," I say to the band and Bill one last time, "are all of you sure you didn't bring any drugs with you? Because if you did, toss them now."

Michael and Steve tell me for the umpteenth time that they have no drugs. That they have their birth certificates and/or passports and that I'm being paranoid.

Bill just tells me to shut-up.

"Hi," says the cute Canadian guard lady at the Peace Bridge Border.

"Hi," we all say back to her, smiling. She's really cute, has a pretty smile and a nice rack hidden underneath her guard's outfit.

"Where're you headed?" she asks us.

Not "What is your purpose for going into our country." Not "Are you transporting drugs over the border to sell to our citizens." Not even. "You look like a band, are you playing a gig?", in which we could have responded by saying we were recording a record and even had the fake documents faxed to us to prove it. No. We were asked "Where are you headed in Canada?"

"Toronto," explained Bill, from behind the steering wheel.

"Any alcohol or tobacco?" she asks.

"Nope," says Bill and Michael in unison, as Steve, who is sitting right behind Bill with a cigarette in his mouth, shakes his head.

"Well, then have a good time, eh?" she tells us and with that, waves us in.

We all look at each other in amazement.

***

Two hours later we arrive in Toronto. As we pull off the QE2, or whatever their fucking highway is called, we are approached by a large gang of punk rockers.

"Squeegee Punks," Bill says.

"What?" I yell, as they converge on the mini-van.

"Squeegee Punks," he repeats, "They're gonna wash our windows."

"Bullshit," I say, as I watch guys and girls approach us and a bunch of other cars that just got off the highway. Some have mohawks, some long hair. Some are bald and all are wearing t-shirts that have band names like "Crass" or "Blanks 77" on them.

"Drive away, fast!" I yell to Bill, "They're gonna rob us!"

"I know," replies Bill, "they do a shitty job on the windows and expect good money."

Sure enough, two seconds later a couple of punk rockers pull out squeegees and buckets and start to wash Bills window. Even though it's raining outside.

"What the fuck is this?" yells Michael.

"I thought only homeless people did this," adds Steve.

"They're punk rockers!" I say.

Twenty seconds later some punk rock girl is banging on Michael's window.

"What's she want?" he asks Bill.

"A tip," Bill replies, bored.

"Give her a fucking FG sticker," I say.

"I wouldn't do that," warns Bill.

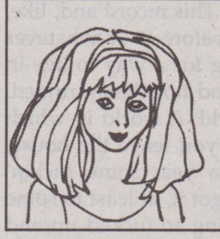
"Fucking squatter with underarm hair, give her a damn sticker," I repeat and hand one to Michael.

He rolls down the window and in lieu of a tip, gives her the sticker with our name and little monkey on it. She just looks at it, then us. Then she starts to say something. In French. And English. We can only make out the words "Fuck You", but we think we get the general idea.

So every time after that, when a Squeegee Punk approached us and did our windows, we gave them stickers. Just to build up our fan base.

To be continued…

Take My Life, Please! Endnotes:
1. I love Canaduh! Cleanest nicest country on Earth! Plus cheap as hell codiene! My dear country to the north, I miss you! 2. furygeo@aol.com



we see through you

with imogen binnie

Hey *Maximum*. I don't know if it's because it's fall or what but I've been just completely unable to deal with all the fucking misogyny everywhere. Usually I'm pretty numb to it—not having any feelings except "dazed" and sometimes "high" is a little trick I picked up around puberty—but for whatever reason, it's been getting to me and I've been feeling shitty.

Like, a couple nights ago all I wanted was to watch a dumb horror movie. I mean, I always want to watch a dumb horror movie, but I couldn't find a single goddam motherfucking movie to watch that didn't make me want to throw my computer across the room, move off the grid and evolve into a dolphin. People suck. I stared at Alex's mom's netflix account for like half an hour going "boring… misogynist… misogynist… no women… boring women characters… boring… ew… ew!… misogynist… racist… boring… one woman character and she dies…" Whatever. The point of the story is that eventually I was like, okay, Imogen you are a nerd so it was inevitable—maybe now is finally the time that you get stoked on anime.

I looked up some anime and I was like, whoa, there are horror animes! And sci-fi animes! I was like, fuck yeah, and picked one about a girl who is the next stage of human evolution so the government is trying to kill her.

Sounds okay to me, man.

I started watching and it opened with this naked woman in an iron helmet using telekinesis to, like, pull dudes' hearts out and explode them, and stop bullets, and just fucking kill *everyone*. I was like, yeah! Cool! Finally! Now I am stoked on anime! Except the next thing that happens is that the badass telekinetic girl falls into the ocean, washes up on the shore, gets amnesia, moves into this dude's house, starts babbling like a literal baby and not killing *anyone* with telekinesis. *At All*. Not even some soldiers or a cop or something! She just moves into this dude's house and makes him touch her boobs even though she has mentally become a child instead of a vengeful harpy. I was like, are you fucking kidding me. I watched three more episodes of it, hoping she would wake up and start fucking killing everyone—just *everyone*. But it doesn't happen. Soon it becomes clear that I'm supposed to identify with the awkward dude character who touches her boobs, instead of this girl who's been imprisoned by the military her whole life (on the unjust grounds that she can do telekinesis). Instead of her slowly coming to understand that she needs to destroy the whole stupid human race, she stays a fucking baby-minded pair of telekinetic tits who only even blow up this one assassin dude's eyes one time because she is scared and confused, not because the assassin dude totally sucks. Also, soon this show introduces another telekinetic naked girl, but she's was all fucking bubbly and cute instead of vicious and she literally calls the military general who is in charge of her "daddy." Maybe that anime ends with those two girls becoming friends and destroying everything in the world—especially the guy who's like, "I'm touching your boobs but I'm awwwwkwwaaaaard, heh heh … heh," starting by exploding his toes and then working their way up; starting by exploding his bones and then working their way out—but I didn't stick around. I just put on Cloverfield.

Again.

My point is just, I have no fucking patience for misogyny right now, and it is just as omnipresent as it always is. So instead of saying something wise and insightful or whatever I just want to write a couple hundred words about how much Converge rules. I know that everybody (except punkers // hipsters who are too cool to like stuff that other people like)

loves Converge so you don't need me to explain why they're cool, but whatever, I'm in a bad mood and that's what I want to talk about so skip ahead to George Tabb if you don't wanna read about it.

While I'm writing this, their new record *All We Love We Leave Behind* just went up on the internet so you can stream it and I've been listening to it and reading reviews of it and I'm like... uh, are we even talking about the same band? I mean, I know that by the time you're reading this you've already bought the 180 gram vinyl and gotten a tattoo, but while I'm writing this it's brand new so forgive me if you've heard this before. But if you put a gun to my head and made me pick a favorite band I would pick Converge. A friend asked me what my favorite band and my favorite writer—Kathy Acker, obviously, who else could anybody possibly pick—had in common, and I don't know where it came from, but almost immediately I was like, both of them are answering the question: when you accept that the world is beyond hope, but you're still here and you're not going anywhere, what do you do?

I guess I stand by that. I was talking to Ben from SWAATH about Converge while we were on tour this summer and he was like, "Yeah man, I mostly listened to them every day on the train during like one of the worst times in my life." I was like yeah! I listened to fucking "First Light // Last Light" and the whole No Heroes album over and over and over for the year that I worked at the bookstore that ate my fucking soul without me noticing, and it was like, maybe the best parts of most days; hanging out with my girlfriend was cool, but she was in school and doing schoolwork all the time. I didn't have a band here yet. I was always at work and always broke, but when Jacob Bannon was like, "I need you to be the strength of widows and soul survivors," and, "keep breathing // keep searching," I was like, okay man. I guess I will.

Not that the lyrics are the most important thing—sometimes listening to Converge is like listening to a band that sings in another language because you can't really tell what ol' Jake is saying most of the time (a nerd on the internet was like "hey Jake, don't sing—keep doing the thing where you sound like a dog on fire," when the first song from this album came out, which is funny and true, but also it rules when he sings so whatever, internet dude). Except! This never fucking happens, I can't think of another band where this happens—most of the time when I've listened to a Converge song so many times that I've got a phonetic interpretation of what the singer is saying in my mind and I go to look it up to see how close I am, *the lyrics are not embarrassing.* Sometimes they even totally rule! "That's where they die // That's where they suicide" in "Distance and Meaning" even uses "suicide" as a verb the way Acker did.

When *Jane Doe* came out I was, like, twenty-two and completely emotionally shut off. I got kind of obsessed with it even though I was also kind of afraid of it and could only listen to little bits of it at a time. I was really into describing the production on that record as something that would grate off a layer of skin; makes sense—I was at a point in my life when I had a thick emotional callous all over my astral body.

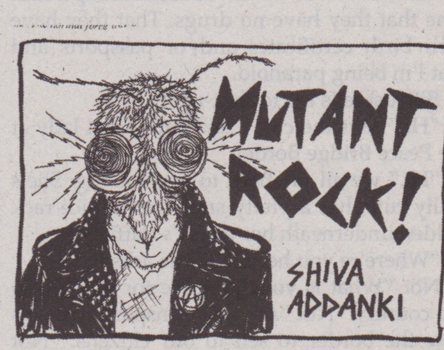
Whatever. My point is just like, early reviews are talking about the new record like it's the most abrasive thing in the world, but it doesn't sound particularly abrasive to me at all. The music itself totally destroys and stuff or whatever, and it's not like my mom would be into, it but the production kind of sounds less abrasive to me than even the last record. Which isn't a criticism—it always takes a while to develop an emotional picture of what a record is like to you and I'm not there yet—it just seems clear to me that the guitars don't sound as brittle and broken-glassy they do on some of the older stuff, and the super high end on the guitars sounds maybe scaled down a little. Whereas like, *Jane Doe* sounds pretty trebly to me, in a way that makes it sound more vulnerable and sharp. On *You Fail Me* the EQ or whatever sounds kind of scooped. But on this one the guitars sound a little fuller and less shrieky. I dunno. Sometimes Converge sounds kind of sickly, but in a vicious way, but on this one so far I think they sound kind of confident instead of sickly.

But other people talking about this record and this band say things like, "it sounds like Satan having a nervous breakdown!" and repeat, over and over, that Converge is "kicking your ass!" and "beating the shit out of you!" and stuff. And people keep using the word "chaotic?" But I don't really hear it, I'm like, they play fast and noisy and stuff, but it's not like you can't follow what they're doing, learn when the changes are and fucking throw a beer bottle at a cop when the breakdown happens or whatever. It's not like you could play the drums like this without being extremely intentional. You know? I don't hear chaos, I hear focus and purpose. This record and, like, all the ones that came before it or whatever sound to me like looking for a way to live in a world that is totally and hopelessly ruined. Y'know. This dumb world. A world in which you get harassed when you leave the house, where a couple times a year some fuckin' dude you thought, like, got it, at least to some degree, will say something so fucked up and gross to you that you'll feel all shitty for a couple days—where no matter what happens, your life is never going to look like what you were led to believe it would look like when you were a little kid. I guess I don't wanna get too specific, but in which sexualized violence is a statistically fucking inevitability. That's what I hear. Not chaos. Critique. Praxis. Whatever.

The Locust used to talk about how their weird music was the sound of the modern mind moving from thing to thing a mile a minute; I was super stoked on the Locust around the time I first got stoked on Converge, but I don't really listen to the Locust any more (ask me sometime to tell you the story of the time my band played at Poland Street and Isaac was like, "here are all the reasons why the Locust had the worst politics" while his friend with a Burzum backpatch nodded along sagely). The point is just like, I don't know why you need stories about Satan or chaos or getting beat up to talk about Converge. Converge just sounds like this world, like my mind. I don't feel like I got beat up after I listen to them for an hour or two, I feel seen and understood in a way that's pretty rare. Of course, this is more about the sound of the music (including the vocals) than it is about the lyrics. I just want to listen to Converge all the time.

Whatever. That's it. Stay tuned for next month when I write twenty thousand words on how confused I am that nobody ever talks about how bad Die! Die! Die! totally fucking rules.

Whatever! If you wanna talk about it email imogen@keepyourbridgesburning.com. Uh, speaking of which, if you got stoked when you read my column last month where I said I was gonna have a SWAATH // Correspondences tour zine done by now... Uh, stay stoked, but it's not done yet. It's hella long and it's taking forever to write out. I do have some issues of Stereotype Threat up on etsy if you want those though—and a story in this anthology The Collection that Topside Press did. The isbn on that is 978-0-9832422-1-5.



As bands with roots in punk aesthetics and outsider complexes are dripping in, to fill the dried up well that the term 'indie rock' has experienced, from being a term for major-label acts, seeing opportunities to make (some) money and becoming quickly disillusioned with the piety of punk culture—you got your Milk Musics, Iceages, Eddy Currents, Spitses and more (*)—the precious little sanctity that alotta people hold dear to the deflated term 'punk' is being lost. Considering the internet and most first-world peoples' propensity towards fickleness at the sight of money, this is not all that surprising or even strange. Maybe a little bit funny—or alotta bit. But in a sense you really can't blame 'em, all this pious talk about the morality and ideology of being independent and *punk* gets kinda tiresome. When money is being potentially thrown at you (ignoring the possibility of making your band look corny from forging associations with dumb shit), you might as well be sticking your head in the sand if you reject it. This is not to say that punk at large has the potential to become commercially viable, or (in no way)

that it *should*. But, y'know, get over it.

Outside of the precious moral constructions that people build around manual production and doing things for yourself, there is value in having a work ethic that doesn't subsist on the active support of others. Also, as a number of you reading this probably have learned the hard way—a lot of things that are full of pleasure and interest have absolutely no commercial viability. There's a sentiment essential to every documentary and coffee-table book made about the formation of punk: "it was easy, it was cheap, go and do it." This is a very existential appeal for the whole thing, and really sits outside the myths constructed around this gravitation towards savage, obnoxious aesthetics. That Desperate Bicycles sentiment gets at the core of the whole thing, and it's from that core that I'm writing here about a shitty little C-60 comp tape called *Nuestra forma de Pensar* (Our way of thinking) made by Teo Hernandez.

There's something about 'international' punk music that appeals to some different sense of aesthetic in people who ferment in this American phenomenon of mentally crippling disillusion, cynicism and self-hatred. Maybe it's the simplicity of experiencing something without having a grip on the language being spoken, maybe it's the feeling of shelter being broken by their 'exotic' nature, or maybe it's the fact that these bands do not appear to express the same crippling self-conscious cynicism. Punk from Spain and South America seems to hold a soft spot in the hearts of those with a taste for genuine recklessness in this junk. Teo is notable for his participation in a bunch of bands that do this right now and this tape has a bunch of bands that are doing something similar. Some of the most fun with music is had in bedrooms, basements, garages, etc.—as an immediate reaction to daily banality and frustration, produced on the spot and (maybe) recorded with whatever means. There's humbleness to the music with that microcosmic existence—the immediacy of it can produce things that don't come with a more refined thought process.

This duct-tape wrapped C-60 bleeds immediacy. Raw recordings across the board, shambolic musicianship, rough visuals...there's no cult of the artist here, it functions more like a mixtape that you'd receive excitedly from an informed elder. Teo writes that he wants to "exchange music and ideas in a more human format than the virtual world which gives [him] anxiety" (**), and these recordings bleed humanity. I was writing a couple months back about my desire to experience more bands who construct an entire universe outta their sound, a total artistic expression that takes over your mind when you experience it, but there's something about the inherent lack of thought here that turns that on its head. Making noise is sometimes just making noise, and can sometimes yield great results. Even though I don't speak Spanish I understand a majority of the titles, which could potentially serve as a source of cynical dismissal for a lack of substance. But that isn't the point here, the substance is in the immediacy of it, and this is half the appeal of punk. Punk bands are most pleasurable on a daily basis when they explode the world inside your head when you experience them, but daily life does not consist of explosions. These recordings are the sound of chipping away at the banality of daily life.

People wrapped up in ideological relationships to the world often lose sight of everyday existence by living in fantasies of grandiose change. The further you sink into these fantasies, the further you disengage with reality. Punk music is in large part a reaction of terror and madness to desensitization and disillusion—reacting to the process of fragmentation and (in some sense) acknowledging death as a very real fact of life. These little bullshit noises made to crack at the recurrent realizations of fragmentation are great just for that. They're small, and sometimes that's all you need. This is all really fucking sentimental but Teo puts it best on the insert, reworking the title to "Nuestra forma de Escapar" (our way of escaping, roughly).

This bedroom noise soothes the kind of insistent and moronic search that I've set out on in finding artists who shatter the ground under my feet in their expression. PILTRAFAS PUNK and RATAS RABIOSAS make hissy, nervous sounding hardcore that's rudimentary in every aspect. ATENTADO and SENTENCIA (the only bands I recognized here) further progress their stark re-adaptation of DISCHARGE for their own vicious expressions of post-modern existence. AVICHINES sound like the kind of punk band who might have stumbled upon the whole thing by accident by way of making savage and simple RNR. LIMALLA are from Cuba (and are really only significant for this kind of alarming origin), and may well have stumbled upon the whole thing. CHEMTRAILS bear a striking and completely un-self-conscious sounding resemblance to the GOSPELFUCKERS, from the broken and obnoxious use of language to the drunk and bloody guitar work ("are we punks or are we nuns?"). These bands emanate rawness not as an aesthetic attribute but in the entirety of their existences as presented on this tape. Tape trading culture is an antiquated little expression of nostalgia in a lot of ways, but this document is a testament to its value—amoebas and germs of emotions and ideas spit out into the world hissing and screeching.

The most pathetic thing you can do with punk is take it too seriously and ascribe more value and credit to it than it has the capacity to hold: I'm consistently guilty of this. But things like this tape are a reminder of the most basic value of it.

*All top-shelf bands. **Or at least this is what an internet translator tells me roughly.

"Destroy Punk—Do it Your Own Way." c/o eggmangel@gmail.com

Fresh off the boat from Sweden in London, a few friends and I tried to track down a mate who had "disappeared" into the Hackney squat world and ended up walking all over Hackney, visiting shit lots of different squats. We saw many different squats including a heroin den with rotten vegetables and syringes everywhere, a freezing cold flat with all smashed windows that we found hard to believe was the home of some ten persons despite it being winter, a perfectly reasonable luxury flat with computers, turntables and expensive record collections inhabited by Italian and Spanish crusties, and a lot of other squats ranging from very professional to very unlivable. It's fun to remember that one of the squats we visited was the cottage in London Fields park that today houses the park's public toilets. But this day of walking all over Hackney and seeing so many disused houses, many boarded up and left to decay, others just empty, left me with a lasting impression that it is so much better and logical for people to squat houses like this, than for them to stand unoccupied and waste away. I was also left with a lasting impression that the local authority of Hackney (or Council) was a corrupt one and one that was absolutely unable to look after its residential dwellings. London is among the most expensive cities in the world to live in and it goes against reason that so many local Council-owned houses and flats remain empty while in the same building students and young families are crowded like sardines, paying enormous rents. Apart from punk slogans, I have seen with my own eyes that squatting is absolutely the right thing to do, although to be honest I never did squat myself...

Since then, during my long continuous stay here in London, I have visited a few more established punk squats. A few years ago a number of Swedish crusties came to see Hawkwind and they ended up staying in a squat in Brixton, south of London. By the way, Brixton has probably the highest proportion of squats as well as punks in all of London (particularly since Hackney has now been cleaned-up and made more middle-class). This squat was a large one, occupying basically the whole of and former NHS surgery. It had three floors, including a cafeteria that had been repurposed to a gig venue with bar, of course, and countless rooms had been turned into living quarters for the residents, mostly South European crusties and punx. What shocked me was that all the utilities—gas, water and

electricity—were still left "on" even though the surgery had obviously long since closed down. The doctors and the nurses had simply left the building, so to speak. In their wake, the building boasted, amongst other things, a dentists room complete with dentists chair and instruments, an elevator between the different floors and a fully-functioning central heating room that looked more like a onsite nuclear reactor (in this room, my friend and I drunkenly smoked some weed and stood debated the merits of English versus Swedish central heating, while Doom's "Relief" was playing on a portable tape player). I think this squat was only open a few months though… But not long after this, I went to the Scum Fest 2008 summer party, which was another mind-defying and successful—albeit short—example of punk squatting in London. For this three day event a whole shopping centre had been squatted! It was great! Imagine *Dawn of the Dead* but with patched crusty freaks running wild, drinking and dancing to bands like Hell Bastards. Sadly, but understandably, the Scum Fest collective has since moved away from organizing large-scale squats for gigs, but on the flipside I hear that the collective usually raise decent amounts for a host of charities and that's obviously to be celebrated.

Another great dissident social and political activist social centre—that occasionally did some punk-related gigs and I think provided rehearsal and studio space for bands—was rampART in the east of London, which was set up in 2004, but got raided by the police and subsequently closed in very questionable repressive measures related to the G8 protests in 2009. I believe the rampART people did find a new place after that, but that also got closed down pretty quickly. It's been years since I heard about anything like that in London. More recently, crusties and punx loosely related to the Brixton crust scene and Scum Fest collective opened a squat at an abandoned pub called The Dewdrop, neatly renamed to the Deathdrop. The first time I went was the night before Terveet Kädet played at nearby Grosvenor Pub (not a squat, but home to 90% of all DIY hardcore gigs in London, for good and bad) when my friends Discarded played along with some fellow crusty travelers. I had left by midnight, but I hear there was later a Euro-Techno disco and a food fight in grand welcome honors for the old Finns. Whether it is still opened I have no idea, but at the time I knew that a number of people lived at Deathdrop, but it was more than just a home, serving also as rehearsal space, gig venue, DIY strip dancing training classes, pizza punk parties and all manner of good things. As I say, I haven't been to the Deathdrop for years so I have no idea if it's still around...probably not.

The sad truth is that London squatting scene has suffered as councils have moved in the bulldozers in recent years in efforts to regenerate rundown areas, and of course more so in the run up to the Olympics. For a brief period—circa a year or two before the Olympics—there were a few squats in Hackney, which is appropriate considering the old days of Hackney squatting... the old days of the CRASS-affiliated anarcho squats in the 1980s when whole streets where lined with squats on both sides of the road, with people from great bands living door by door... In 2010 I went to a squat gig to see Social Circkle, Skiplickers and The Wankys (etc), this being a Big Takeover gig (London's best DIY HC one-girl collective, which is the handy work of fellow *MRR* columnite Bryony B). The gig was at a central Hackney squat in a former solicitors firm, which, appropriately enough, was no less than a few doors down from the Hackney police station. But as always, I think the squat was closed down shortly after this gig. I cycle past the building daily and think it's now what's popularly called a "luxury flat." I think it was the same summer when Barcelona hardcore kids GLAM played at the squatted Rat Star Social Centre in Brixton, being another Big Takeover event. That squat was also great: a large gig room, a roof where you could hangout, etc. But as the squat was the home to a number of people subsequent gigs were turned down, understandable perhaps...but anyways, I think that squat has since closed down anyway.

Most of the above text, and a bit more, was written a few years ago when Filip Fuchs asked me to write something about London Squatting for his amazing punk zine/bible *Hluboká Orba*. The article was called, "A loose introduction to London squatting," for obvious reasons. I've of course visited a lot more squats in London—squats of friends from skateboarding, squats where you go to buy weed, parties at squats belonging to friends of friends that were basically just like any other London flatshare and countless number of ad hoc squats parties—in the zine article I wanted to just write something colorful about a few punk squats I had been to. To make the article a bit more directly useful for prospective Czech punx wanting to come to London to squat and live, I added contact details to various local squatter organizations at the end of the article. Fast forward to 2012.

On the first of September 2012, squatting became illegal in England and Wales. Under section 144 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act, squatting is now punishable by up to six months' jail and fines of up to £5,000. Notably, this change in the law only affects residential buildings, and does not affect commercial premises. According to the Guardian newspaper, "in a circular sent to judges, courts and the police, the Ministry of Justice confirmed that what were previously known as "squatters' rights"–which protected squatters from forceful entry by landowners (this loophole made squatting semi-legal, and meant that if not the law, at least society, would stand firmly on the side of squatters—would become redundant in relation to residential premises)." Last week I read about the first case under this law: a 21 year old kid from Plymouth who had come to London to work, who got sentenced to just under three months in prison after pleading guilty to "occupying a flat without permission." The change in law was driven by scare stories about "gypsies" stealing people's houses in the Evening Standard, which is blatantly the landlord's newspaper of choice, each issue full of "property porn." It is no coincidence that one of the squatters that back in 1999 guided my friends and I to all the different Hackney squats was wearing a Evening Standard newspaper raincoat with a big "FUCK" written above the Evening Standard logo. Now, I would not recommend anyone to believe a word in Evening Standard, but it's amazing how far these scare tactics have worked, because even in my extended social world I have heard friends repeat what is basically a modern urban myth of house stealing gypsies (as propaganded by the Evening Standard). Recently I heard a friend talk about a mate's mate (this is the very definition of a urban myth, supposedly it's a true story but it always turns out to be "from someone who knows someone who has...") who had their house stolen by "gypsies" who then refused to leave the house and then this poor mate of a mate had to pay sky high court costs to get the gypsies removed. I have heard variations of this urban myth, but the one detail that is always the same is that the girlfriend is pregnant. You know, it adds just enough relatable human drama to make middle class liberal white people let go of any lingering leftist impulses inherited from a previous age. But the real irony is that these people—"my non-punk friends" as I like to call them, are by no means squares, yuppies or Tories—we all grew up in the 2000s and therefore took part in a broad alternative London culture that in many ways was influenced by the city's long tradition of squatting.

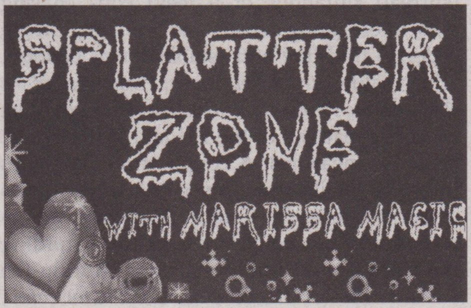
Standing outside in my garden, drinking and smoking, I argue to my friends that, "that's all over now." "But you were never a squatter anyway so why do you care?" Before I can respond, my girlfriend adds, "if this means you won't be going to your punk gigs all the fucking time then I am all for making squatting a crime." This is the same girlfriend who herself lived in squats for years. "But seriously though," I tell them, "it's not about squatting per se, but how it is symbolic of all these things that are happening that are slowly eroding the space for an alternative life in this stinking shithole of a city. What with the harsh State repression of all forms of protest and protest movements—including the State's violent intrusion in alternative political groups, from animal rights to environmentalists—what will happen to the alternative freedoms and lives that we experimented with in our early adult years?"

I go on and argue, drunkenly, that the kids growing up now will not be able to enjoy the alternative world of London that we had done in the late 1990s and early 2000s. An alternative London culture that perhaps—at a stretch—could be said to have survived from the 1970s?

Independent do-it-yourself punk has survived three decades, squatting being a small part of that. But it's all over now. My girlfriend is Polish so perhaps understandably she hates everything that's remotely "leftwing" and her sense of aesthetics is biased against anything "alternative." Her favorite expression is "Crusties playing bongos." I have long since stopped even trying to make her understand... "But even for those outside of punk," I plead, "or who now have grown up and no longer fancy living in squats, there are greater changes happening in society that no one even seems to care about! All of this will filter through to us in a lot of ways, like culture, art, music and fashion and lot of other things besides. It'll filter through to us in ways that we won't even be able to imagine today!"

When I cycle to work I see that while the real alternative underground world of London has progressively shrunk in the last five years or so, there's much more counter culture on the streets today than five or ten years ago—but all of these counter culture fashions are done by designer brands and high street retailers. The mainstream has finally assumed ownership of the counter cultures! Everything that I love from skateboarding to punk music has been blitzed for two decades with hard marketing dollars and today there is nothing as dead as skateboarding and punk. I know you guys don't care about "the crusties playing bongos," I continue, gesturing wildly with my arms as I go along, "but I am not talking just about hardcore gigs being held in commercial gig venues where you get your pint in a plastic cup with a corporate beer logo, or how punk communication happens on the internet, but because we can now witness the final death of the Alternative London, the future of this city is now looking like the host of the most boring dead template-culture ever!" I try to emphasize this statement by throwing my cigarette on the lawn. That's when I realize that they're all rushing inside. It appears X-Factor is starting on TV....

End note: The second PEOPLE album is out. It is called *Authentic Oral Communication* and it is the best punk rock record since *Never Can Eat Swank Dinner*. It is my record of the year 2012. So far the record is only released domestically (Japan) on CD, but it will be released on vinyl for overseas consumption eventually. Stay tuned.



I was in Olympia (again) at this show and the place was packed to the gills. The guy that was playing was this boy that I knew a million years ago, maybe he hit on me once, but I was too drunk and dense to realize it, and maybe once he rejected my advances to which I responded, "but I'm so pretty!" A different time, a different me. At that time, a million years ago, he had been in this band that was on the Melvins side of grunge. They had a few way too bro metal moments, but overall it was heavy and blown out and bummer (like the emotion, not like the band was a bummer... really I'm trying to say I was into it). But now, or last month, or whenever the last time I was up there was, I was at this show because I had nothing better to do and I was watching his new thing that I guess he's doing now. It makes me think of this one time a friend of mine was just like, "I like seeing bands play!" and that's just what I like to do too.

I had heard that he (this boy) had disappeared for a number of years to some metal birthplace or some shit and then reformed the old band with himself and a drum machine. Somebody said it sounded like Nine Inch Nails? I could be into it. But then I was standing there, at the actual show, up on tippy toes trying to see over the crowd and it was completely awful. The worst. A fleet of metal dudes puckered like male models and playing terrible electronic music. Now I will tell you, it's true, for the most part I dislike most music involving electronics. Harsh noise is cool, but the further away it gets from that the more I lose interest, so it already had that against it—but you know sometimes there are good things in unexpected places. But I swear it was a gang of heshers flashing blue steel and sporting welldone coifs. The vocals were far too loud, the drum machines tinny and sounding like they were programmed by someone who has little understanding of the role of drums in a band, unnecessary keyboards, shitty riffs, embarrassing lyrics. I was standing there, visually agape and cringing and wondering why I was wasting hearing loss on this and then one of them started singing through a vocoder. Fuck it. I mean, it was both horrific and hilarious. But... sometimes when listening to music that is awful all I can see in my head is two white dudes at a gigantic mixing board biting their bottom lips and bobbing their heads, maybe saying yeah every once in a while, definitely doing some kind of "this really rocks" arm movement. Just like "we're talented musicians and we're professionals, we are writing the hits and we're really just wailing, you know, rocking the fuck out, we're really going to make it" or whatever.

Anyway, feeling utterly confused and disgusted I finally gave in and left the room, exiting the grotesque spectacle to sit on a curb outside and play with my phone (the new staring at your feet). The room continued to be packed. Is it because everyone is friends? I mean yeah, but really? So confused. The headliner was someone that I had never heard of so of course I asked the internet about him, read some reviews, but neglected to actually try to listen to anything. A couple places made mention of him being in some kind of stoner metal band at some point which seemed promising. However, this was even worse then the other guy. Glitchy country. I shit you not. Does that even fucking exist? I mean, I guess it does, but why? Why?!? It's like this time I was in some chain diner type place at like four in the morning eating this gnarly French toast and I spotted a guy wearing a shirt that said, "women can't resist ether" on it. It blows my mind. Someone had to think of that as a funny joke, someone had to design it into a t-shirt, someone had to screen that design onto a t-shirt, some store had to sell it and then someone had to buy it and wear it in public before I even laid eyes on it. Think about that line of approval, the amount of people who had to look at that and think, "yes, this is a good idea."

Ok, so maybe that analogy is a little far fetched. What I mean much more is that somebody was like "this is a good idea" and then a whole crowd of people were like "yes, this is a good idea." What I'm really trying to get at is that this guy who played stoner metal is now playing shitty dark wave, or whatever they call it, and this other guy who used to play stoner metal is now playing some terrible hybrid of electronic and country music and everyone seems to be thinking it's a good idea. People appear to be into it. I stood outside and kept on ranting to everyone I knew. "What is this? What is going on? Is this what's cool now?" All the fuzzed out weirdos of ten years ago are now playing car commercial jingles that pitchfork can swoon to? What the fuck happened? Is this the future?

I probably wouldn't be so utterly confused if the room hadn't been so packed, but it was! And in a way it made me feel out of touch, maybe even old, which is funny because I'm not old, even though I explain my love of shows that are over by eleven by saying that I'm old. The last time I remember feeling old and out of touch was at a show in San Francisco that was stuffed with cleanly looking eighteen year olds wearing crisp and clean void shirts, but that time I didn't care about feeling old and out of touch because it also felt like high school when I didn't give a shit if I fit in because all those people were assholes and I just wanted to get out of there anyway. But this time it just felt baffling and maybe slightly depressing. Is this what it is now? Shit that blasts through mall stores swarmed with teenagagers spending soooo much money on aisles of identical outfits?

And, oh god, I'm totally doing that terrible thing of "when I was your age..." which doesn't make sense anyway because the people in these terrible bands are my age, maybe older, which just says to me, is this what happens when we age?

And then I make mountains out of molehills.

I am sitting on my sofa deflated and dejected, (like the Kinks song or the Lovechild song? You decide! If you have not heard either one I command you to do so immediately! Youtube either band name and word sofa and all will be revealed). My skin feels like it's covered with wire wool, my bones are aching and my brains are dissolving. I cycled home from work last night and while I was stopped at a stop sign, in the pouring rain after an hour-long cycle, some upstanding citizen in his seventies felt the need to stop his car and inform me that all cyclists were cocksuckers, myself included. I don't understand why men think it's OK to approach lone women after dark, literally when I am by myself commuting home from the night shift at my work, every fucking shadow is a potential attacker. Don't talk to me or whistle while walking behind me, or catch my eye. Get the fuck away from me and let me go home without having to negotiate your potentially threatening presence.

I imagined this shitty old man calling his grand daughter a cocksucker as she rode around on his front lawn on her bike with training wheels. I imagined him being one of those leaden republican trolls that have made the comments section on any news website unreadable with their bile and hate and rage. I imagined him driving into the concrete posts of the bridge I had just passed under, as I bombed down the hill as fast as I could to get away from his shitty Giants baseball cap and Archie Bunker persona.

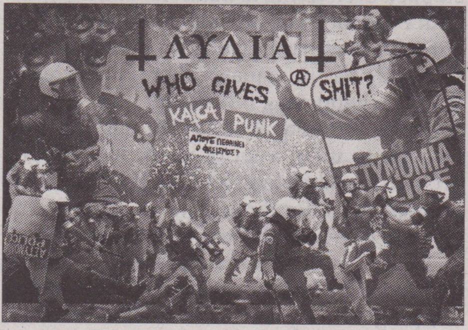
I thought about my grandparents, both from Kentucky, both so kind and generous and sweet to strangers and friends alike—two people who probably never called anyone a cocksucker in their lives—and wondered to myself what could have happened to this toxic human, probably considered to be part of the "greatest generation," that made him think it was OK to call a lone woman commuter a cocksucker!? The internet has quickly made the most vile thoughts part of the national discourse—people's bodies and politics are dissected by lizard-like minds who haven't read a book since some teacher made them do so in high school, if then. Being an ignorant hateful troll is considered real American home-spun apple-pie authentic; people who would have known previously to hide their secret hatreds let them ooze out into the public sphere, goaded by talk radio hosts and Palin-like politicians.

I am sitting on the sofa listening to my favorite Francoise Hardy LP and drinking my second cup of coffee, gearing myself up for the cycle into work, past oblivious blonde ladies driving Mercedes SUVs whilst screaming at the hired help on smart phones, whilst simultaneously doing all they can to obliterate me and my bike with their tank like vehicles. Past guys with Euro-stubble in convertibles with "I Ride with Romney/Ryan" bumper stickers emblazoned proudly on the back blasting terrible Ibiza house jams. This is San Francisco! My bike ride takes me through the worst part of the city, inhabited by people whose biggest struggle is picking which brunch place to line up outside each week. Most of the time I see through them, and just charge up and down the hills towards my work, a bastion of radical thought and literature in a sea of gross dudes puking on their pleat-fronted chinos as they veer from strip joint to strip joint. I have understandably never really hung out in this part of the city before, it's constructed for the entertainment of oblivious yuppies and the hills above it are inhabited by the 1%. People who pay more in taxes in one year than I will make in ten years! Well, that's if the tax cuts for the rich do not continue! It's pretty insane when you hear about someone who will have to pay $130,000 in taxes on their income this year if the tax cuts stop. No wonder that jerk in the convertible rides with Romney. There is another half of this city where kids graduate from high school without being able to write a sentence, where women work three or four jobs to make rent, as boho youthful yuppies cycle past on $2000 fixed gear bicycles, farm to fork brunch-ward bound.

Anyway I am full of bile today, but here are some things that make life less hateful.

1) Finding a stash of old Flamin Groovies Filmore posters at my work, cool Monty Python meets Art Deco stylings.
2) Reading the book The Manuscript Found at Saragasso. I saw the movie, an amazing Polish psychedlic disturbance created in the '60s, but was intimidated by the book for some reason. I thought it was gonna be Don Quixote style work, but it isn't. It's a total pleasure to read, like Italo Calvino rewrote Chaucer. A million stories piled on top of each other and somehow, though the book is as thick as Moby Dick, you can't put it down. Endless adventure!
3) The amazing Finnish band the Splits sent me their LP! It's on PTrash and it rules so hard! They remind me of the Testors, the Dictators, but are all girls, and I think I already wrote this in my review of their 7" a few issues back, but they named themselves the Splits because they loved the Slits and the Splits equally. So rad.
4) Diane of Livid/Opt Out/Brilliant Colors fame joined my favorite local band, Index! Index is the best and they have a tape you should send out for OK? I am reviewing it next issue, but it's so so so good! For people that love Sham 69 as much as they love the Kleenex 7"!! www.cut-up-tapes.tumblr.com
5) Bona Dish! An amazing mostly girl band from the early '80s who only had two tapes, both of which you can download if you can use an internet search engine or listen to on YouTube, total strange bedroom post punk constructions that are dark and poppy in a primitive compulsive fashion. They have a Facebook page with lots of links for you to check out! www.facebook.com/pages/bonadrag

That's all the positivety I have mental capacity for this month. www.whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com, layla (at) maximumrocknroll.com



Last month I continued to talk about how football and how I came to apprecite and love it. I also talked about Asteras Exarhion (Exarhia Star). I want to make a correction here and say that it is indeed Star (singular), not Stars and also that I accidentay wrote ΟΦΗ as being the acronym for Olympiacos FC, when it is in fact ΟΣΦΠ (that dreaded ΟΣΦΠ written everywhere, usually in the tackiest, often misspelled, tags and graffiti, hahaha). That was a stupid mistake on my part, as I know very well that ΟΦΗ is Heraklion's team on the magnificent island of Crete. So sorry ΟΦΗ fans, I know you aren't anchovies (γαυροι)! Also, to clear up any ambiguity, in 1976 was when PAOK fans started organizing officially at Gate 4, the Toumba stadium itself and all its gates have been around since 1959.

In this final segment on footbal (and how even just writing about it has my heart racing faster), I want to talk about the Ultras. Often confused with hooligans, the Ultras are the fans you will see at football games waving the flare around in tifo choreography; the ones who organize the crowd to chant in a round and the ones who create and set up those gynormous banners you see floating over the thousands of spectators. The Ultras have more invested in the team because, unlike the players who play the game, the fans actually live the game.

Some of these banners make political or social commentary and there have even been (surreal) situations of (Greek) cops chasing fans, interogating drivers and searching cars in order to find 'the anti-establishment banner', which said *Corrupt Politicians, Parliament of the Affluent, the Wrath of the Revolted Will Choke You*; a banner reacting to the EU and IMF's recent austerity measures. A couple more examples might better illustrate my point. In the chaos of burnt forests, freedom burns, which was in response to the political corruption regarding forest fires, a common occurrence during the summertime in Greece. *Bribe Takin' Gun Totin', Trigger Pullin', Nazi Thinkin' Power Crazy Police Force – ACAB G4*, in response to recent police violence during demos against the EU and

the austerity measures. In Turkey, the famous diehard Beşiktaş Ultras raised a banner that said *We Are All Black*, after rival fans made negative reference to the French-Senegalese Beşiktaş player Pascal Nouma. The Beşiktaş fans even raised a banner saying *We Are All Pluto*, after an international committee of astronomers stripped the planet of its planetary status. We all know that's preposterous and Pluto is indeed a planet, and an awesome one at that!

Going back to the Ultras, some groups have been known to align themselves with extreme (political) ideologies. A fine example are S.S. Lazio Ultras, Red Star Belgrade, the Bad Blue Boys from Zabgreb's Dinamo, more recently APOEL fans from Cyprus—but that's just fascism for you, sneaking its way into everything! The real Ultras are obviously antifa and they use football as a platform for critical thinking and positive influence. One world famous example is Hamburg's team, Sankt Pauli, which you may know of by its Jolly Roger logo and passioanate fans. In some cases, like in Turkey, or Poland, Ultras must meet at secret loactions so as to not get their families involved, for fear of being attacked by rival fans, most commonly fascists or neo-nazis.

One of the focal points of the Ultras culture is also the anti-commercialization of football, but at the end of the day, it's about keping football away from harmful, exploitive powers; much like punk must protect itself. It ends up going beyond the confines of the football field and the idea of football as merely just a game. Because it is obviously so much more.

A football match is like a micorgraphy of society—people from every path of life, cutting across every demographic, all jumbled together for two hours, with only one thing in common: the game. Not everyone even likes the team in the same way, or for the same reasons, but everyone loves seeing that ball get kicked around. And this is and should be the fundamental reason people play and watch football, for the love of the game. However, you know as well as I how convenient it is for the wrong parties to use something like football as a means to fanaticize people into ethic, racial or any other kind of prejudice or hate. Fascists, cop pigs and other scum often find their most ready recruits among football crowds, an easy pool from which to prosiseltize young and angry youth. This is excatly why the Ultras take action. They create a 'safe space' for fans while voicing their anti-establishment/anti-cop/antifa sentiment and challenging convention with their DIY spirit.

A local collective that does similar work based in Athens, Greece, are the Radical Fans United (RFU). Every summer they set up their RFU festival to focus on this love of the game, the social and political meaning of sports and the exhilarating experience of witnessing it all up close. Every year, dozens of teams enter for both a football and baskteball tournament, which last three days and are accompanied by film screenings, exhibits, talks, freshly cooked souvlakia, live shows and hundreds of people! I really wanted to score some fucking goals, so last summer I decided I wanted to be a part of it too! A gavros friend of mine from Asteras Exarhion jokingly talked about coaching a girl team to take part in the 5x5 tournament but I quickly made sure it remained no joke and joined the team. The RFU headquarters were just below Strefi Hill, which is where Asteras Exarhion has its stadium (for its female basketball team, which have been kicking ass in the first national league for a decade straight!) so we decided the shady basketball courts of Strefi Hill would be the most suitable for us to train.

Another four girls I vaguely knew from the square, anarchist demos and Asteras joined the team and we got started. All five of us were pretty badass ladies who didn't take shit from men anyway, and our coach/friend was notorious for being a bit of a cheeky chauvinist, so we were more than happy to show them all that we could kick some ass! In fact, our goalie's dumbass crush even went as far as to say said 'I can't believe a girl is fucking up something I love. There's no place for women in football.' Fuck that. I'll bloody my shins and scrape my knees everyday buddy if it means I can score a goal, prove you wrong and make you sore. Of course, minor detail, none of us had ever actually played football before, but we didn't care, the momentum and determination were there and that's all we needed. We trained once a week for two months, then twice a week for the last month leading up to the tournament at the end of July. Sure, we took breaks to buy cold beers from the kiosk, shared smokes right after we were done scoring perfectly off-side goals, and usually all ended up partying together in the square right after practice, but that was half the point. We were the Skyles Exarhion (Exarhia Bitches!) and we were ready to bare some teeth!

Of course we lost, 0-1, but hey, our rivals had two semi-pro players and a girl who could maneuver the ball like a fucking champ! They actually made five attempts, so for our awesome goalie to save us four times was pretty kick ass! I think the ouzo she made us all drink before hand gave us that extra energy and ballsyness we needed! However, we were determined to show them that we play by our own rules, so we devised a devilish plan! We gave instructions to the DJ to blast a Greek punk song we all loved just as the last minute of the game clocked in. Eva and Hara made sure defense was tight, I kept the centre clear and Haroula drove the ball towards our goalkeeper, who then grabbed tit, ran across to the opposite goal and, to everyone's dismay, slam dunked that thing right into their nets! The crown went wild and they cheered us on, booing the other team and throwing their empty cans at them, shouting at them to treat us nice because we are dangerous—it was mythical!

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On a completely different note, it is almost Halloween as I write this, Slapsgiving soon to follow, then X-mass. That horrid time of year when you feel compelled by that hippie dude named Jesus and all his followers to celebrate with family and friends, the fact that you are all still on speaking terms and survived another year, without going to the ER, the morgue or worse, jail. If this is indeed almost the end of the world, then make sure to give them hell! Do not quietly into that good night! Get mad! Upset their 'safety'—revolt!

Because if you owe the system, it owns you and these scum-blooded crooks are cornering us into submission by any means possible. Fascism, religious conflict and economic austerity, they're all nasty by-products and convenient preservers of the oligarchy. They will wring humanity of every last cent and penny, run every river dry, cut every forest down, kill every animal and 'enemy'. And when that is all pillaged, they'll take everything else—your property, your freedom and right to justice. Then your family. It's already happening, don't you see? It's called democracy. And you help keep it in place.

At the end of it, hopefully humans will realize that money, and the whole goddamn system that goes along with it, is nothing but a fictitious noose around their neck; and if they really want to—and they will need to—they will free themselves of it. There should be no more human power fueling the totalitarian machine of profit; walk away. There should be no building, institution or legislation higher than the rationality and self-governing integrity of man; resist. We are only as free as our governments allow us to be. And when people finally have nothing but their very lives left to loose—and everything to gain—then they will fight. I only hope it's not too late.

Happy New Year everybody, remember to love one another.... www.nemesisknox.com , lydia@maximumrocknroll.com

THE DICKTATOR

mariam bastani

Holy Shit everybody! Welcome to the END OF THE WORLD!!!! That's right! The end is nigh! We are all worm food, if the worms survive, plagues will ravage the populace and the bloated corpse of Jim Morrison will rise to croon to us into oblivion.

As you may know, I am stepping down as *MRR* coordinator, meaning that Lydia will be at the helm. What that also means is that I will be stepping up my game in the search for my replacement (if we survive). Now, I know that you all have noticed that "elected officials" always try to exact change at the end of office...you won't see that from me, because I don't have to wait for the end to make changes, BUT since it is the end of the world, fuck it.

Mariam's End of the world Fuck off and Die top three:

1- To those of you that keep telling me that *MRR* is "too PC," I hope you all die getting choked by cocks, getting a train pulled on you by all of the Aryan nation. Death by Cock. That is your hell. I am sick of your whining. Shut the fuck up. It's like an atheist saying they don't believe in god over and over and over and over… You know what I am saying. I get it; you are above conversations about culture and race. "Obama is prez bro, we are Post racial!" G.G. Allin is the coolest dude ever. Well, how about you go live in a cave with your shock value Skrewdriver t-shirts and scream all the racial epithets you want into oblivion and the darkness? Would you feel better? I would. Thinking of you rotting with the stalactites in the dank, mildew festerings of the lonely hole you created for yourself… Don't worry thought. You will be joined by your ignorant friends and become a race of Morlocks, which would be the ultimate irony if you know anything about H.G. Wells, but of course… you don't because you are a fucking moron.

That felt good… The reason I bring this up is because I have been hearing this Ad nauseam in the three years of doing this job. These Russian punks recently came to *MRR* to film part of their documentary about US zine makers. I promptly got blackout drunk and talked a bunch of shit on camera, slurring and crazy. That's pretty much like me, hehe… But, what I do remember from that night is that they handled me being loud and drunk without fear and they said several times that *MRR* is known for being "PC" in Russia. Then they told me how hard it is to be a punk in Russia, that punks actually get murdered in Russia. I don't claim to understand the intricacies of the cultural and subcultural intersections in their country, but I can't help but think about the punks and weirdo kids that are murdered here—hate crimes… What about racially motivated crimes in which the people murdered aren't "punks" but people who don't have a choice in being "an outsider" by virtue of their skin color (among other things…) and not because of a Mohawk?

Again, while I do have very firm thoughts and informed, educated opinions about cultural and subcultural issues, especially about punk in the US, I don't claim to understand these complexities taking place in another country, particularly one that I have no real interaction with—so why did these Russian punks feel that way about certain incarnations of punk in the US? I know that people will rant here about the US and its foreign policy (for as many people who say we are "too PC" the same amount of people say that we are apolitical assholes). Guess what? A lot of us know damn well what that means. We have one foot on this soil and one foot in our homelands, many of which are not Europe, the first world or places that anyone hears about. We know what racism is, we know how fucked up policy is here and we live it everyday. I know when people talk about racism and sexism and the other 'isms" that we are subject to, all you hear is bullshit. Maybe you hear nothing. Well, whatever you do hear, hear this… *we are tougher than you.* I can accept John Joseph's point of view better than yours and if that is a shock, then you don't understand anything.

I don't expect anyone to be a reader of my column or writers far better than I that cover some of the same subjects, but I hope one day you get it and I wish you an easier time understanding these things than those of us who had no choice. We have embraced it, we live it; that and the struggle of being a threat by merely being in existence—and being punks. We either have to assimilate or we rebel. We let the pressure crush us or we join together and in numbers we hold the constant odds at bay. We who identify as punks by choice, while simultaneously outside of the dominant culture, understand what it means to be outsiders more than you do…no matter how punk you are. We don't give a fuck what you think, but just think about how much time you spend complaining about what we think… We belong here and there is nothing you can do about it, so deal. Or get dealt with. Or don't, we don't give a shit because we have been hearing your whining long before the term "PC" existed. "All I wanted was a pepsi… *sob*"

2- Message board trolls. Don't give a fuck about 'em and I never will. You are a shitty "taste maker?"—cool, start a band, get loose and do something and then I can take your shit seriously. You got beef? Talk to the person instead of typing it out like a fucking clown. I wanna have a "Stars of Punk Message Boards party!" and watch while every one of you fucks shrivel at the thought of social situations, much like the way you shrivel from the touch of a woman (please end this last sentence with what ever gender you wish you could be fucking, but instead troll online because you are a pathetic piece of shit. Thank goodness for those unmarked packages containing your online purchases of lube and fleshlights). "Live in the now!" —Garth, *Wayne's World.*

3- This list could be really long, but for your sake this is my last: Fuck any punk bands that say they need corporate/major label sponsorship to survive. *MRR* policy is one that has been in place since the beginning. The fucking BEGINNING. We did not make it, so when you cry about your band not being covered 'cause you took 200 bucks, got sponsored by Nabisco shredded wheat and got tube socks for your songs, fuck you. This has always, always been a DIY only magazine.

My Opinion: I listen to bands that are on majors all the time. Big Freedia did a Scion record; I love my Mercyful Fate albums and my freestyle. I listen to lots of metal and hip hop, but if a "DIY" punk band tells me one more fucking time that they are sick of eating McDonalds on tour then come home poor, boo-fucking-hoo. Fuck you and your shitty ass planning. I couldn't give two shits about your eating habits on tour. Go to a fucking co-op (use your iphone to look it up, dipshit) and spend your three bucks on kale, a lemon and some muthafukkin' fruit instead of spending all your money on coke. Fuck the inertia of the blazé that has enveloped the world and punks who think being the "punk" at their job is cool, while trashing other punks or never going to shows. You are an empty fashion, you are a fucking poser. Fuck you and your one-shot full sleeves. I hope you die.

***

If the world doesn't end this month I would be overjoyed! Life is grand!

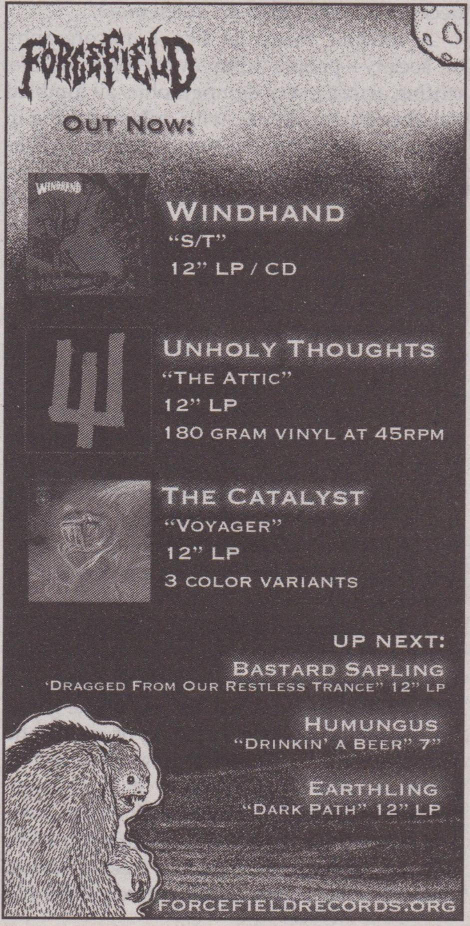
—I am taking part in the POC zine project, which could be coming to your town if you are interested!

—Thanks so much to Slingshot collective for helping us out with mail supplies over here at *MRR*! Also thanks Eduardo from Outraged for helping *MRR* out with some much-needed equipment.

—Oh! And Subversion fest will have probably happened by the time you read this, so I will let you know, that it was prolly a great time and it is one of the few things that makes me happy to be in SF. Up the punks!

—Congrats to Brace Belden for his five years of being the Last Punk! You are the son I will never have and while you are a pain in my ass...I'm glad you are around to piss me off.

mariam@maximumrocknroll.com



NEW BLOOD

FIVE QUESTIONS ASKED TO FOUR NEWER BANDS

BY KAT SMITH

1- DATE AND LOCATION OF FORMATION

2- REASON FOR FORMING

3- LYRICAL CONTENT

4- SOUND

5- FUTURE?

WARTHOG

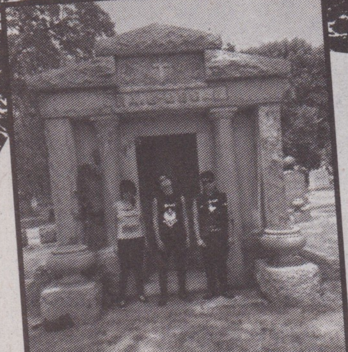
PHOTO: SAMANTHA LUBRANO

1. MIKE. CHRIS AND RYAN FORMED THE BAND LAST NOVEMBER AT THE NICK POOT MEMORIAL GIG AT TOMMY'S TAVERN IN BROOKLYN. SULLY AND ME (MATEO) JOINED EARLIER THIS YEAR.
2. WE F I GURED IT WAS ABOUT TIME NYC HAD A GOOD PUNK BAND.
3. CHRIS WRITES ABOUT TYPICAL HC BULLSHIT. THINGS THAT PISS HIM OFF. RACISM. ETC
4. EARLY POISON IDEA MEETS MID-PERIOD TO LATER POISON IDEA.
5. KATORGA WORKS WILL BE PUTTING OUT OUR DEMO PLUS ANOTHER SONG OUT AS A 7" IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. WE'LL BE TOURING NEXT YEAR. MORE SONGS AND RELEASES. AND IN THE IMMORTAL WORDS OF METHOD MAN. MI AMOR. MERCI. OUI OUI. BON BONS AND ALL THAT GOOD SHTUFF.

DEADPRESSURE

1. LATE FEBRUARY 2012 SAN JOSE.CA
2. LONG TIME HOMIES. WE HAD JUST TALKED ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE AND WERE HELLA BORED AND DECIDED WE NEEDED TO DO IT.
3. STUFF WE DON'T LIKE. CRAPPING YOUR PANTS. SKATEBOARDING. PIZZA. GETTING PHYSICALLY INJURED. GOVERNMENT MIND CONTROL
4. HARDCORE. PUNK. GRIND AND SLUDGE ALL ROLLED UP IN ONE FAT POWERVIOLENCE BLUNT
5. LOTS OF NEW SONGS. HOPEFULLY LOTS OF TOURING. MAKING NEW FRIENDS AND FUN FUN FUN

PHOTO: PMURRAY BOWLES



SADICOS

1. SADICOS BEGAN EARLY 2011 IN LYNWOOD. CA. THE THREE OF US RECORDED A DEMO FOR SILENZIO STATICO EARLY 2012 AND PLAYED OUR F I RST GIG IN LONG BEACH. CA AT 6TH ST. HAUS.
2. WE'RE ALL CLOSE FRIENDS WITH PASSION FOR DIY AND PUNK.
3. A BALANCE OF PERSONAL STRUGGLES AND WORLD BULLSHIT... KILL POLICE!
4. WE GREW UP ON 70S/80S PUNK AND HARDCORE. INSPIRED BY BANDS AROUND THE GLOBE: COLERA. DISCHARGE. THE ICONOCLAST. RAPPRESAGLIA. TZN XENNA. ETC
5. RECORD 4 SONGS FOR AN EP ON LENGUA ARMADA RECORDS. GO BACK TO THE EAST COAST AND DO MORE DATES . PLAY A FEST IN PUERTO RICO

NOSE BLED

1. FALL 2011. AT THE REMINGTON SKATE MANSION IN FORT COLLINS COLORADO.
2. TO F ILL A VOID THAT SURROUNDED US. ESPECIALLY IN FORT COLLINS.
3. PREJUDICES AGAINST ONESELF. DISCONTENT. IGNORANCE. ANGST. CONNECTIONS GONE SOUTH. "SOLITARY FUCKING RECLUSE. DECADENCE IS YOUR WALLS OF SELF ABUSE. VIOLENT ARE YOUR PRIVILEGES. YOU KNOW NOTHING JUST IGNORANCE."
4. THIS IS A HARD ASS QUESTION... HARDCORE THATS STRAYS AWAY FROM THE FORMULA WITH SOUND PROGRESSIONS THAT ARE DIFFERENT AND DISTINCT BETWEEN SONGS. WE REALLY TRY TO KEEP OUR SOUND AWAY FROM THE EXPECTED.
5. RELEASE A NOSE BLED 7. RECORD A SPLIT WITH OUR BUDDIES FROM DICK WIDLER. AND TOUR.

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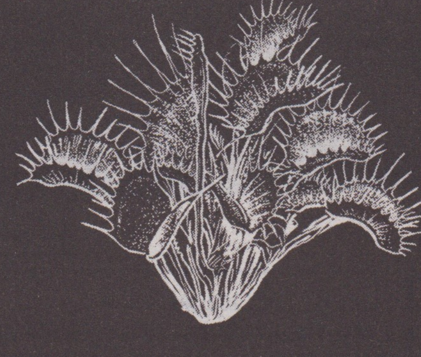

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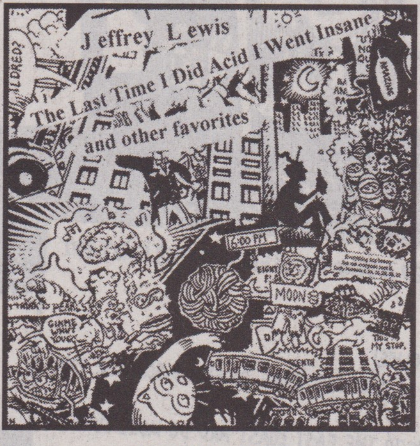

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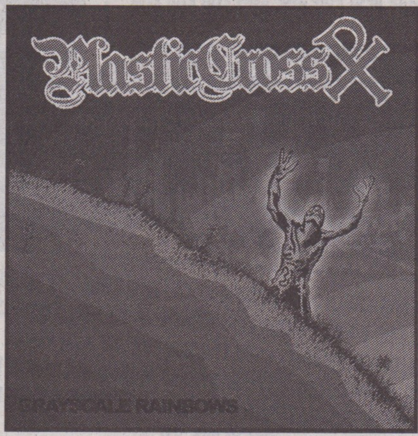
"THE LAST TIME I DID ACID
I WENT INSANE" LP



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MYSELF AND I
OWEN COOK
ONE TIME WHEN I WAS HITCHHIKING HOME, I GOT PICKED UP BY FLEA
MIKE B. THE FLEA IS IN THE BAND THE 'RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS' AND HAS BEEN IN A BUNCH OF MOVIES
HEY ARE YOU FLEA?
FEAR
UH HUH
HE WAS DRIVING A RENTAL SUV AND TRYING TO FIND A RADIO STATION IN A SEA OF STATIC
KZZSHHHH SHHHH
THANKS FOR PICKING ME UP MAN
NO PROBLEM MAN... I USED TO HITCHHIKE
WE TALKED ABOUT THE MUSIC BIZ AND THE ROCK'N'ROLL LIFESTYLE
YEAH I PLAY GUITAR IN THIS BAND CALLED G-
COOL MAN HAVE FUN WITH IT
HE WAS GETTING BACK TO HIS HOUSE IN BIG SUR AFTER A BIG WORLD TOUR
KSHH HHSH HHHH
HE TOLD ME 'NEVER TO TRY AND MAKE IT IN A ROCK'N' ROLL BAND'
ITS A BUNCH OF BULLSHIT*
AFTER ABOUT 12 MILES HE DROPPED ME OFF ON THE SIDE OF ROAD A FEW MILES FROM MY HOUSE
YEAH, THIS IS GOOD HERE
OK MAN
AND WE WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS
COOL MAN I'LL CHECK YA LATER
VROOOOM
*(PARAPHRASED)
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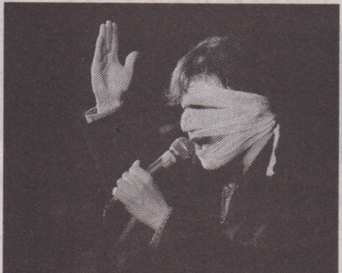

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NEWS

News compiled by Donny

PADDLING ACROSS THE CARRIBEAN FOR FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IN PUERTO RICO

by Carmelo Ruiz-Marrero

Puerto Rican environmental and human rights activist Alberto "Tito Kayak" De Jesús made an epic crossing through the Caribbean Antilles this summer, departing in a kayak from Venezuela's Paria Peninsula on June 21, headed toward the island of Grenada, and continuing more than 1,000 nautical miles to Puerto Rico.

De Jesús, 54, kayaked the Caribbean to call attention to and gather international support for the release of Oscar López-Rivera, a Puerto Rican who has been incarcerated in the US for 31 years.

López-Rivera was convicted in 1981 for "seditious conspiracy." Specifically, he was charged with belonging to the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), a clandestine Puerto Rican pro-independence group that engaged in armed struggle in the Chicago and New York areas in the 1970s. However, he was not convicted of any specific act by the organization. This 69-year-old man, who has not been accused of one act of violence, is serving a de facto life sentence, much longer than sentences handed out to convicted murderers and rapists. His next parole hearing will be in fifteen years. De Jesús is calling on the peoples and governments of the Caribbean and Latin America to join the call for López-Rivera's release now.

Since the US invaded Puerto Rico in 1898, repression and persecution against Puerto Ricans on the basis of political beliefs has been constant and relentless. It has spanned from police and FBI surveillance, infiltration and disruption of lawful and peaceful independence organizations and campaigns, to outright assassination.

For instance, on Easter Sunday 1937, local police, under orders from US-appointed governor Blanton Winship, opened fire on a peaceful Nationalist march in the streets of Ponce city, killing 19 and wounding around 150 people.

And in September 2005, FBI agents—with the assistance of local police—murdered independence leader Filiberto Ojeda-Ríos, head of the clandestine group Los Macheteros, in his house in the town of Hormigueros. The autopsy determined that he died from lack of medical attention. The image of flak-vested FBI agents gloating over Ojeda-Rios as he gasped his last breath burns in the heart and consciousness of every patriotic Puerto Rican. To add insult to injury, the FBI chose to carry out the assassination on September 23, a date that is sacred in the Puerto Rican calendar as the anniversary of the 1868 Grito de Lares, the nation's first uprising for independence and freedom.

The US government's criminal acts against Puerto Rico's self-determination and its people's freedom of expression remain unpunished in the courts—the empire does not judge its own actions. No US government personnel ever did time for the Ponce massacre or for the killing of Ojeda-Rios, or for the mysterious death of independence activist Angel Rodríguez-Cristóbal in 1979 in Tallahassee federal prison while doing time for a non-violent protest on the beaches of Vieques island against the US Navy presence there. Rodríguez-Cristóbal allegedly committed suicide right before the end of his sentence.

But Puerto Rico is no passive victim. This Caribbean nation has a centuries-long tradition of struggle against colonialism, dating back to the Taino resistance against the Spanish conquest. Many Americans know about the 1950 attempt on US president Harry Truman's life and the armed attack against the US Congress four years later, both acts committed by members of the Puerto Rico Nationalist Party. For more than 110 years of US colonialism, there has not been a moment in which the invader has not encountered resistance. In its Resolution 1514, the United Nations recognizes the absolute right of colonized peoples to fight against colonialism and for their independence and self-determination.

Most Americans who know something about the FALN do so because of the bombing of Fraunces Tavern in southern Manhattan on January 24, 1975. The tavern was—and still is—a classy bar/hangout for New York City's upper crust, where, in 1783, George Washington bade farewell to his troops after the end of the Revolutionary War. The bomb killed four and wounded dozens of others. Every time López-Rivera is up for parole, right-wing campaigners linked to law enforcement agencies take relatives of the bombing's victims to the parole board and the media to speak against his release. But they tend not to mention one significant fact: He is not in prison for the Fraunces Tavern bombing; in fact, no one is.

Another unmentioned fact is that, according to a FALN communiqué, the Fraunces Tavern attack was in retaliation for a bombing that took place in Puerto Rico two weeks earlier. On January 11, 1975, a bomb went off at a public event of the independence movement in the town square of the city of Mayagüez. Activist Angel Luis Charbonier and Eddie Román, a bystander, were killed. To this day, no one has been prosecuted for this act, although the independence movement has leads on the specific identities of those behind the bombing.

Most of the men and women who were arrested with López-Rivera were released in 1999. He is the only one that remains in prison. He has spent more time behind bars than any other Puerto Rican independentista ever did—longer than Nelson Mandela and almost as long as Leonard Peltier.

De Jesús, or "Tito Kayak," represents a new breed of activist. In 1999, De Jesús made history by camping out alone in the

US Navy firing range in Vieques to end the war games and target practice that had gone on there since World War II. At first, people called him insane, but his insanity caught on: Half a dozen people joined him, then dozens. The protest went on for months. More camps were set up by political parties, labor unions, churches and independence organizations, and the whole affair snowballed into a phenomenon that turned Puerto Rican society upside down. In May 2000, US authorities raided the camps and arrested hundreds, but the protesters failed to quit.

In November 2000, De Jesús, with the cooperation of about a dozen supporters, climbed on top of the Statue of Liberty and hung a "Peace for Vieques" banner from her head. This was a repeat of an almost identical action taken in October 1977, when activists draped a Puerto Rican flag on Lady Liberty's forehead as they called on the Jimmy Carter administration to free the nationalist prisoners that had been in jail since the 1950s.

When they saw him on top of the Statue of Liberty in 2000, US law enforcement authorities saw their chance to put De Jesús away. At that time, he was under probation after having been repeatedly arrested in Vieques. He spent a year in a Manhattan jail for violating his probation. For that time, both De Jesús and López-Rivera were prisoners of the US.

Four years after De Jesús' lone stand in the firing range, the impossible happened: The Pentagon left Vieques. Nonviolent protesters had routed the world's most powerful naval force. It was a gigantic victory for anti-colonial forces and peace-loving people all over the world. The Puerto Rican people thus have an enormous debt of gratitude to Tito Kayak. But he did not rest after that.

In 2007, De Jesús hung a banner from the Las Américas bridge, which crosses over the Panamá Canal, to protest the interoceanic traffic in nuclear waste. Also in 2007, he went to the West Bank to express his solidarity with the Palestinian people. During his visit, he climbed the Wall of Infamy being built by the Israeli state and put a Palestinian flag on top, in plain sight of baffled and flabbergasted Israeli snipers.

In mid-September, Tito Kayak finally arrived in Puerto Rico, ending his epic voyage by landing in a protest encampment set up in Isla Verde beach, near the international airport. The camp was set up in 2005, organized as Beaches for the People, to physically obstruct the illegal invasion of the public Isla Verde beach by high-rise hotels, and to call attention to other equally harmful and illegal encroachments of hotels and other private developments in Puerto Rico's beaches. The story of this camp, continuously occupied for seven years, where protesters have set up organic gardens and solar panels under the constant threat of eviction by the police, is one of the great underreported tales of this Caribbean nation.

Looking back on those three months of danger and extreme endurance—with obstacles ranging from searing sun and treacherous currents to seemingly insurmountable funding and logistics challenges—Tito winces and describes the whole undertaking as a nightmare. But the real nightmare is the one that López-Rivera has been experiencing for 31 years.

FBI TAILED PORTLAND'S MAY DAY ANARCHISTS HEADED TO SEATTLE

by Levi Pulkkinen, from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer

As the investigation into the May Day riot continues, recently unsealed court documents show the FBI's interest in several suspects predated the political vandalism that swept downtown Seattle.

An FBI special agent outlined the allegations against six Portland anarchists suspected of traveling to Seattle for the May 1 demonstration.

Investigators contend the Portland residents were among the 50 or so black-clad protesters who smashed windows, and clashed with police and members of the media around downtown Seattle during the demonstration.

According to the special agent's statement, which was filed in US District Court at Seattle and unsealed on October 18, five of the six protestors are suspected of damaging the William Kenzo Nakamura Courthouse during the May Day demonstrations. They were joined in the vandalism by seven other anarchists and several unaffiliated demonstrators. Writing the court, the FBI agent suggested the protesters came to Seattle to destroy property.

The agent went on to name six Oregon residents suspected in the vandalism. All are anarchists known to Portland-area law enforcement; the FBI agent contends text messages and surveillance show they traveled to Seattle for the protest, and, in one case, described the day as "awesome."

None of the suspects identified in the recently unsealed search warrant have been charged publicly in the May Day vandalism. [Media reports] do not generally name suspects prior to charges being filed. Well-publicized inquiries are currently before grand juries in Seattle and Portland, but no indictments against these suspects have been made public as yet.

An FBI surveillance team followed five of the suspects north from Portland when they drove to Olympia the day before the May 1 riots, the FBI agent told the court. The surveillance team broke off after the group arrived in Olympia but text messages recovered by the FBI and rental car receipts indicate they arrived in Seattle the morning of May 1.

Requesting a warrant to examine 25 devices seized by investigators, the special agent asserted several vandals are suspected of destroying government property, crossing state lines to riot and conspiring to commit the same crimes.

Aware that some anarchists were preparing for "direct actions," police and federal officers prepared for vandalism around downtown Seattle, the agent told the court.

Investigators contend that 12 people dressed in black—what investigators describe as "black bloc" uniform—vandalized the courthouse, causing tens of thousands of dollars in damage. According to the FBI report, a vandal threw an incendiary device similar to a road flare at the courthouse.

Describing the vandals as "clearly coordinated," the agent told the court a wave of black-clad rioters would attack the building, then retreat to make way for another wave. While they were doing so, two other protesters unaffiliated with the anarchist group joined the destruction.

The FBI agent contended Portland police have recovered clothing seen during the protests, found while searching a residence associated with several of the suspects, with a search warrant issued on October 3 by US Magistrate Judge Mary Alice Theiler. In subsequent searches, investigators recovered other clothing they contend links the suspects to the vandalism. Investigators also seized 14 pieces of electronics and 11 CDs, which they've now thoroughly searched.

US BORDER PATROL PLANS MASSIVE COMPLEX ON SOVEREIGN TOHONO O'ODHAM LAND

by Brenda Norrell, from Censored News.

Ignoring human rights appeals and outrage over the abuse of Tohono O'odham by US Border Patrol agents, Homeland Security plans to construct a new massive US Border Patrol complex on sovereign Tohono O'odham land in Pisinemo District in southern Arizona. According to federal documents, it would house 32 Border Patrol agents and include a helicopter launch pad, horse corrals, canine pens, a communication tower and a remote surveillance tower.

As usual, a Finding of No Significant Impact was declared in an August report, despite the fact that saguaro in the region are home to the federally protected species of the lesser long-nosed bat.

The site in Pisinemo District is an alternative, because O'odham rejected the complex in the communities of Dirtburn and Kupk on Tohono O'odham land, according to the federal document.

In this area, there are Tohono O'odham culturally sensitive plants including saguaro, cholla, Palo Verde, prickly pear cactus, mesquite and wolfberry.

The massive complex would add to the noise and pose more risks to local O'odham from helicopters, increased pollution and increased water usage by the Border Patrol. It would also disturb the fragile land of the Sonoran Desert. Further, more O'odham land would be seized for the corridor for a separate electrical transmission line that would be constructed to the north, according to the documents.

Already O'odham are protesting the militarization, constant harassment and abuse by US Border Patrol agents here. An O'odham was beaten in front of school children at a school bus, and other agents have held O'odham women and elderly at gunpoint. Border agents have shined flashlights into O'odham women's homes at night, stalked O'odham women, endangered O'odham lives with high rates of speed and destroyed the fragile desert with off road vehicles. Further, the constant spying and searches by federal agents have left many O'odham living in a state of fear.

Tohono O'odham Bennett Patricio, 18, was run over and killed by the US Border Patrol in this region. Bennett was crushed as he walked home at dawn. Bennett's family sought justice in federal court and accused the US Border Patrol agents of intentionally murdering him. They believe Bennett walked upon the border agents involved in a drug transfer in the desert. The Border Patrol agents were never held accountable.

O'odham protesting the US Border Patrol say they can not depend on their tribal government to protect them because it has been coopted by the US government.

Hundreds of US Border Patrol agents have been arrested for drug trafficking and conspiracy. The US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has already been exposed for Project Gunrunner, which had supplied cartels with assault weapons since it began in 2005 in Laredo, Texas, before expanding to the Arizona border.

TALISMAN ENERGY WITHDRAWS FROM AMAZON

from Amazon Watch

On September 13, Talisman Energy announced its decision to cease oil exploration activities in the Peruvian Amazon and to exit the country upon the completion of ongoing commercial transactions.

"We have fought long and hard against Talisman's drilling in our territory because of the negative environmental and social impacts we have seen from oil drilling around the world," said Peas Peas Ayui, President of the National Achuar Federation of Peru. "Now that Talisman is leaving, we can focus on achieving our own vision for development and leave a healthy territory for future generations."

Talisman is the fifth oil company to withdraw from controversial Block 64, located in the heart of indigenous Achuar territory in a remote and bio-diverse region of the Amazon rainforest. Talisman has been exploring in Peru since 2004 and has come under increased pressure by human-rights groups and shareholders for operating without Achuar consent.

"Talisman's exit sends a clear message to the oil industry: Trampling indigenous rights in the rush to exploit marginal oil reserves in the Amazon rainforest is not an option."

Despite Talisman's claim of attaining local support from communities and signing good-neighbor agreements with 66 communities downriver from their operations, the company never had the consent of the majority of communities living within Block 64. Talisman first invested in Peru one year after leaving Sudan and became the sole operator in 2007, shortly after John Manzoni's appointment as CEO. Manzoni was replaced by ex-TransCanada CEO Hans Kvisle on September 10.

"We are the owners and the original people of this land," said Peas Ayui. "No outside person or company may enter our territory by force, without consultation and without asking us. We have been fighting against oil development on our land for seventeen years, and we maintain the same vision to protect our territory and resources for future generations. Let this be a clear message to all oil, mining and logging companies: We will never offer up our natural wealth so that they can extract our resources and contaminate our land."

Block 64 is just one of several new efforts to extract oil from the headwaters of the Amazon in northern Peru and southern Ecuador. Anglo-French company Perenco was recently awarded a production license to operate in Block 67 in Peru despite a legal case against them for drilling in isolated peoples' territory. ConocoPhillips has faced mass protests in Iquitos, Peru, over plans to drill wells in a protected area in the Nanay river basin east of Block 64. In Ecuador, the government plans to auction new oil blocks on the Peruvian border despite strong indigenous opposition. The Kichwa community of Sarayaku recently won a case in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights against the Ecuadorian government for signing an oil contract without their consent or consultation.

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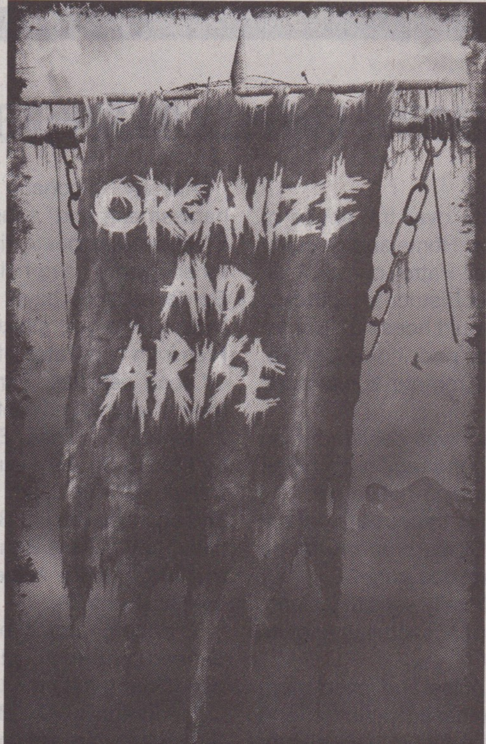

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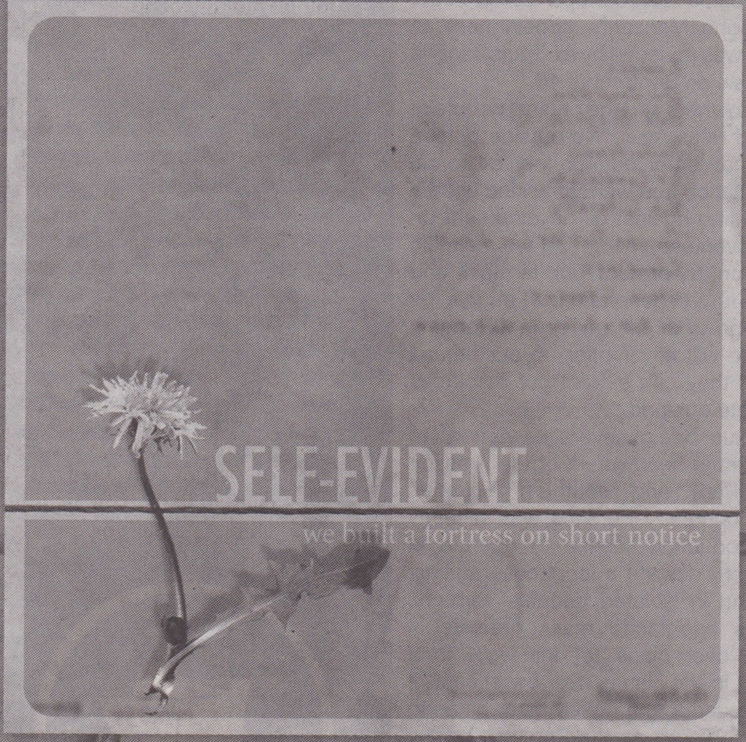

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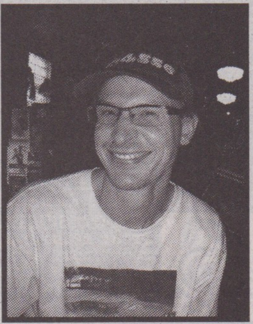
MRR asks you!

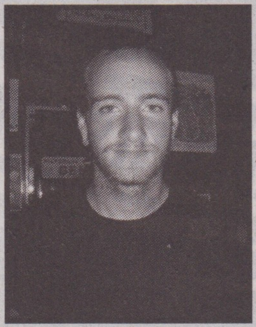
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: Are record stores still relevant? Asked at Slamfest 13, featuring Direct Approach, Spearhead, Social Divorce, Sketchbooks, in Hamilton, Ontario Canada.

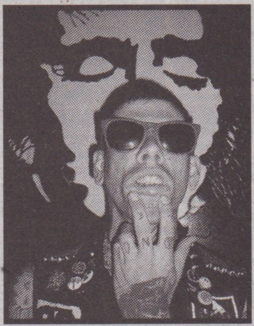
Becky, Hamilton
Yes and I believe they will stay that way. Vinyl sounds the best and there's something to be said for flipping a record to hear the awesome song on side B. A lazy afternoon listening to new records in the shop and learning about new bands is the best way to spend the day.



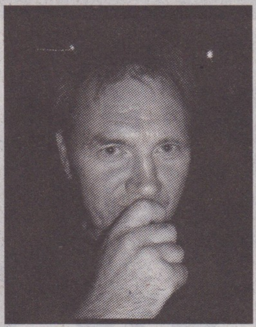
Grant, Hamilton
I rarely bother with mail order and would rather have a cool place locally I can hang out at and actually meet like-minded people. Who knows what might come of it or what I'll find. Beats the hell out of the internet!



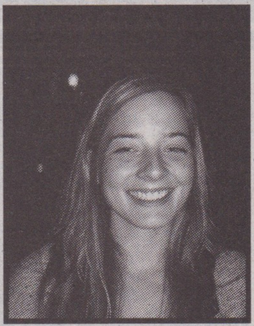
Kelsey, Hamilton
Record stores are still very relevant! They not only provide great music, but on a local level they are a meeting place for the grassroots.



Brett, Hamilton
Yup, they are and always will be. They are community meeting grounds for like-minded music obsessives. And it's always cooler to score a gem in person.

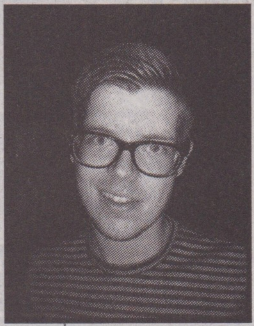


Jamie Problem, Hamilton
Yeah of course but I don't wanna go to some corporate, buttfuck CD-infested ripoff place to buy real music. Indie punk shops are where it's at!

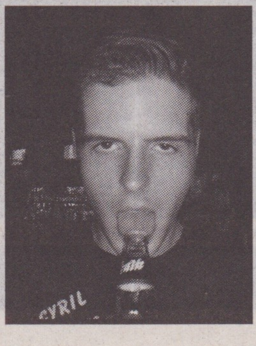


AnnMarie, London
Going to a shop and finding that record you've been looking for is like finding a hidden treasure. It's always exciting discovering new/old records. Just wish there were more of 'em!

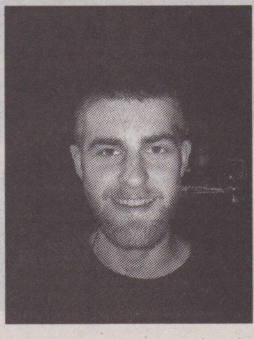
Chelsea, Hamilton
They will always be relevant as long as people still listen to music.



Kev, Hamilton
Absolutely. My favorite shops feel more like a good friend's record room than a store.



Matt, Hamilton
Fuck yeah! Digital music is silly, if you dig rock'n'roll, spend your hard earned money at your local shop. Support bands and buy records because it's fun. Pizza + Beer x Records = Fun!



Kevin BS, Hamilton
Yes, good record stores create a welcoming environment for people who are into music and/or involved in the music community. They also help expose people to bands and artists who may not get a lot of exposure. Record stores will always be more relevant than iTunes.

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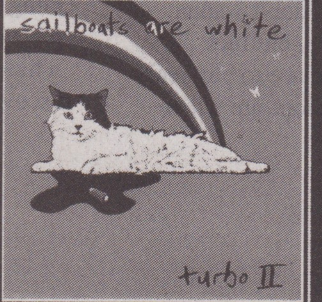

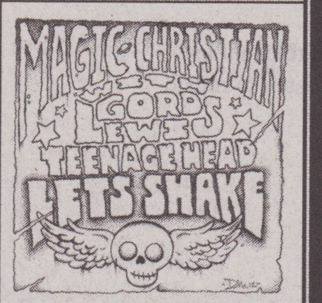

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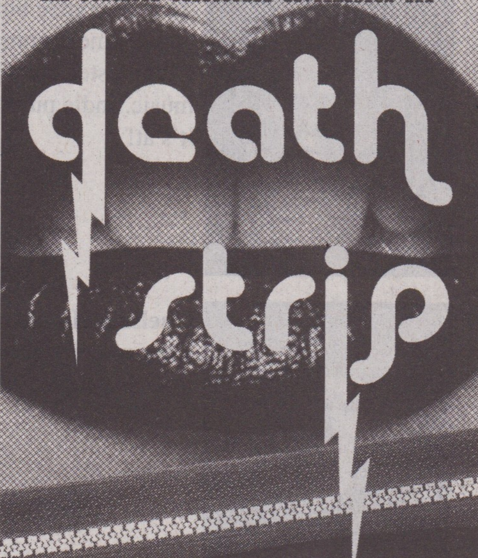

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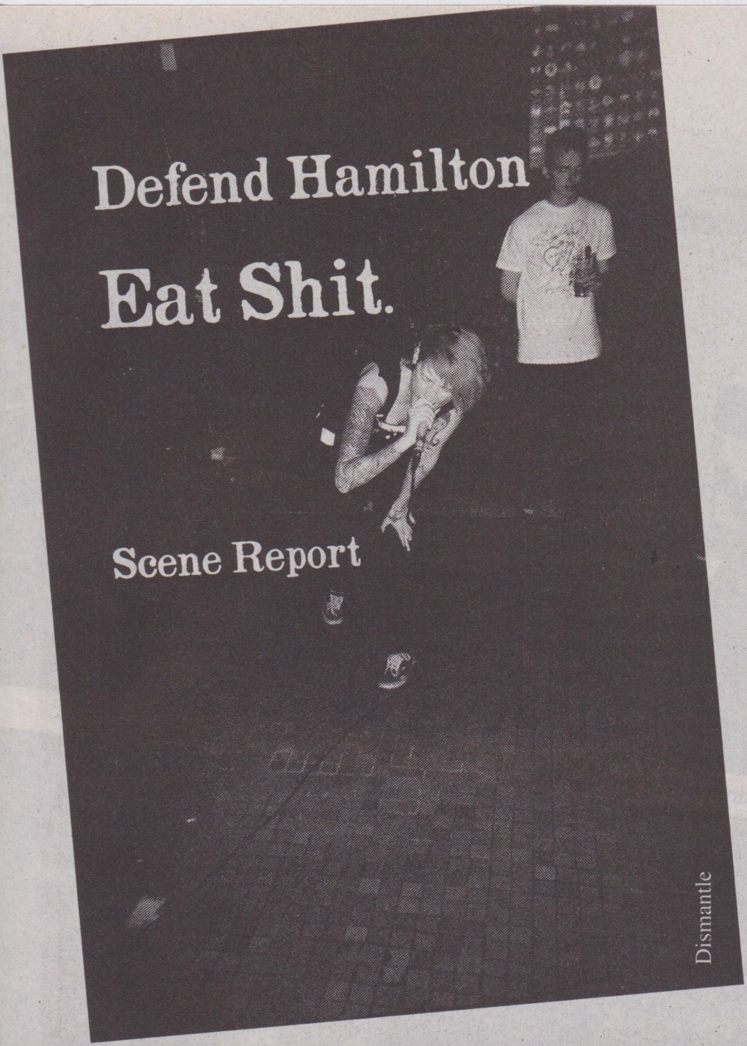


Scene report by Evelyn Dick. All photos by Chels Watt

In over 30 years of *MRR* the Bethlehem of Canadian punk has never had a proper scene report, so grab a coffee and join us for this guided tour of the Hammer.

When I mention the Bethlehem of Canadian punk, think TEENAGE HEAD, THE FORGOTTEN REBELS and SIMPLY SAUCER, who founded the original punk scene in the '70s, are still playing regularly to packed houses and continue to rip it up.

Lately the Hammer scene has exploded with a lot of new, fun bands playing out. This is just a sampling of bands that we know of.

PICK YOUR SIDE, the destructive HC annihilation band, recently had their LP release show and have a track on the local *Destroy Music: Start your Own Band* compilation LP, as well as a new 7". The band will be leaving for a European Tour in the Fall.

TV FREAKS are a hard rocking band that mix punk, garage and KBD for a fun night of high energy music. The band has a great stage presence and really ups the energy on any show that they are playing. They have recently released both an LP and a 7" on Hamilton's own Schizophrenic Records. For more info see televisionfreaks.blogspot.ca.

DISMANTLE are a six-piece fast hardcore band that have been getting people's attention both on-stage and off. Dual male female vocals over a fast '80s HC sound. They have a slight crust influence and seem to have a love of '80s punk. DISMANTLE plan to record a demo.

SAILBOATS ARE WHITE have returned after a hiatus. The band are back and healthy and as raging as ever. SAILBOATS ARE WHITE have a hard driving sound that has elements of The Screamers, Big Black and Mission of Burma. Don't let the drum machine scare you away; they are worth the price of admission. *The Best of Turbo II* 7" has just been released on Schizophrenic Records.

SNAKE CHARMER are one of the most popular bands in the city. They play a fast blend of speedcore – throw some SEPTIC DEATH and CONFUSE in a blender and turn up the feedback. Friendly fuckin' guys, angry fuckin' music. You want to be up front when these guys play as they are fun as hell. They play live off the floor so come on up and be a part of the show. The band are currently resting as Fuckin' Ryan, the madman behind the drums, broke his hand. Unfortunately the band had to cancel their tour and recording session but they will be back in full effect in the Fall. The band will be recording a 7" for Schizophrenic Records, as well as a split 10" lathe cut with CORPUSSE for the End of the World Show scheduled for December 20, 2012. They have a blog at tighthead.tumblr.com.

SOCIAL DIVORCE are a rad new band comprising two members of SNAKE CHARMER and ex of VATICAN CHAINSAW MASSACRE. They play a great blend of '80s hardcore mixing melody, aggression and more melody. The band recently played their first show and have quickly become a force to be reckoned with. They promise a demo to be recorded soon.

NOT are a young band of high school kids that had their roots in SKA and have since evolved into a full-blown punk catastrophe. NOT have a habit of destroying the stage and each other during their shows. Let's hope this habit never dies. Check them out at nothamilton.bandcamp.com.

SKULL SERVANT draw influence from Man Is The Bastard/Bastard Noise, fuse elements of punk, metal percussion and noise. The band features a flexible cast of anywhere between two and seven members. Their first vinyl appearance was part of the *Destroy Music* LP, and they have a 7" EP planned. Contact them through their blog http://skull-servant.blogspot.com.

BORN WRONG have just returned from their tour of the East Coast. The band had a blast and got a great reception. They've just released their first release which is a split 10" record with KLEINS96. Catch them on their next tour. Check them out if you like your hardcore with a hint of melody and riffs that enter your head and never leave. They have started to work on their next 7".

THE PRE-NODS bill themselves as Hamilton's handsomest band and spend most of their time looking at themselves in the mirror. They've been busy playing a bunch of shows both in and out of town. The band plans to record a full length album to be released in the summer of 2013, even though members of the band are really busy. Johnny Uprise hosts *The Uprise*, a punk and hardcore radio show on 93.3 CFMU. Jim is a co-founder of The Spooky Astronauts Drawing Club and has a blues project with his buddy Frankie Flowers. You can follow their shenanigans and nudity at facebook.com/theprenods.

WIGGLER AND THE TINY HUMANS. WIGGLER are a quirky band that mix early punk and other elements into their sound. If you need a picture think a chunky stew of Frank Zappa, MC5, Richard Hell, Mooney Suzuki, Funkadelic all in a blender. Serve with caffeine. The band plans to hit the studio again in the fall to track their new material.

DEBT'D are a pissed off aggressive hardcore band that has been playing a lot this summer. DEBT'D just released an 8-song tape, *Show Me Your Money*. Check 'em out in an alley, a bar full of burnouts, or a living room lined with wooden skids. If you're real lazy find them at http://debtd.bandcamp.com.

AT WHAT COST are heavily influenced by peace punk and UK 82. Atom and Tyrant have blazed through a number of drummers in the past year and a half. They've found a permanent skinpounder and have been playing everywhere they can for the past several months. The band are currently recording their next release.

ZINES

Thunder is a local zine that Kristine and Nathaniel distribute to shops and bars for free. It's a fun zine with interviews, reviews and upcoming shows. The zine is progressing with each issue and they are also working on an internet version.

Chels Watt is a great local artist who is generally up front either taking photos or moshing up a fuckin' storm. Chels does a couple of different zines – *Lomozine* and *Disposable* – both focusing on her photos. Press runs are generally limited to 50 so it's best to catch up with her in person or at one of her art showings.

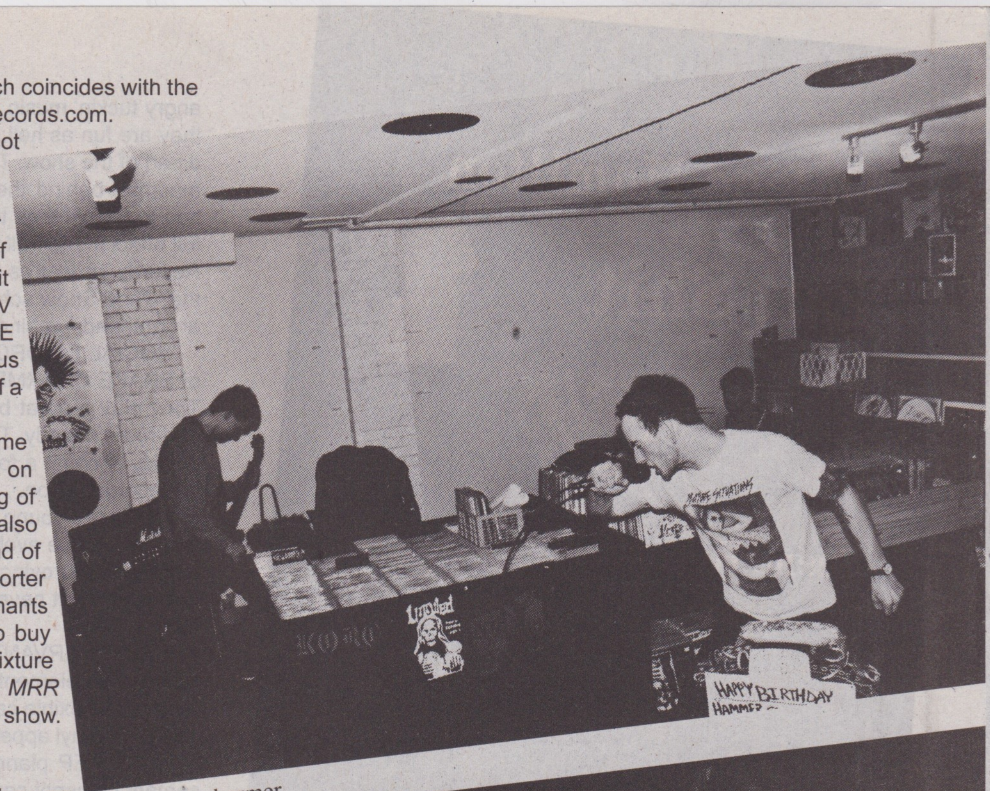
RECORD LABELS

Rebel Time release mostly CDs of political punk and street punk. Rebel Time has also released the CLASS ASSASSINS 7" and may have more vinyl releases in the future. Rebel Time hosts shows about

four or five times a year, and host *Rebel Time* which coincides with the REBEL SPELL tour. Drop 'em a line at rebeltimerecords.com.

Schizophrenic Records have been releasing a lot of records from around the world with a focus on international hardcore, as well as reissues. They do a great job on all of their releases which number close to 70. The label has recently released a lot of local music including the GUNNAR HANSEN split LP, *Destroy Music* Hamilton scene compilation, a TV FREAKS LP and 7" and a 7" by SAILBOATS ARE WHITE. Out next is ROACHBANK, a vile, mysterious Hamilton band that nobody seems to know a hell of a lot about. Check 'em out at schizophrenicrex.com.

Destroy Music: Start Your Own Band is the name of the scene compilation that was just released on Schizophrenic Records. The LP is only a sampling of the great punk scene that we have. The record is also a tribute to Imants Krumins who was a good friend of the Schizophrenic folks and a huge fan and supporter of the Hamilton and worldwide punk scenes. Imants was there from day one – he was the first fan to buy the FORGOTTEN REBELS demo tape, he was a fixture at The Saucer House. He also used to buy the *MRR* radio show and play it on the first hour of his radio show. Imants did it all!



snake charmer

PUNK RADIO

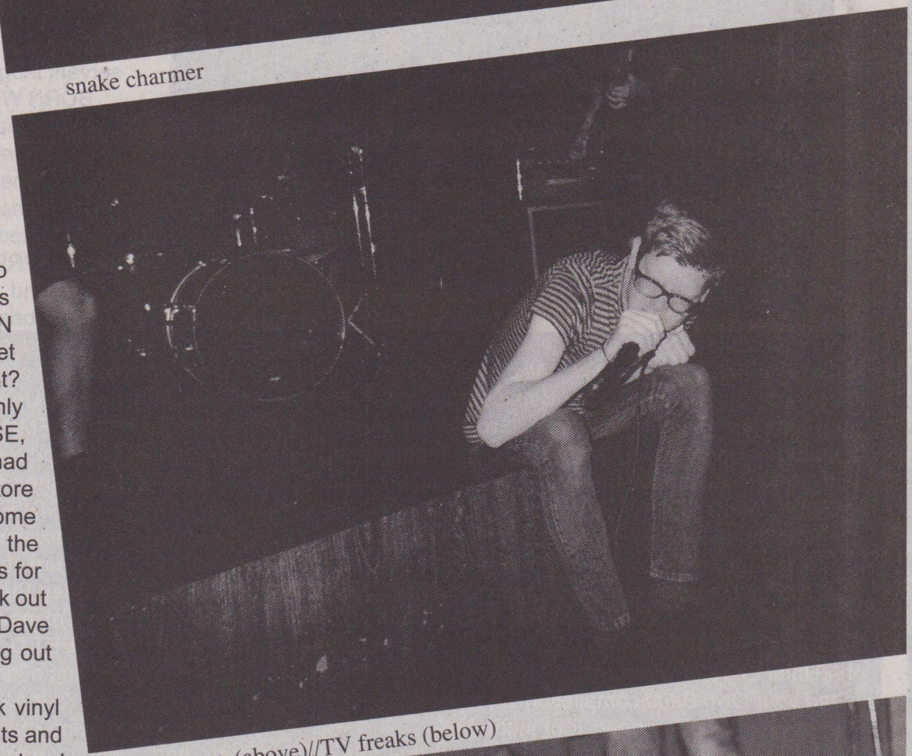
This is Underground Radio is a newer radio show on McMaster University radio station CFMU 93.3. The show is Friday/Saturday 2am–8am. For more info check them out at facebook.com/thisisundergroundradio/info.

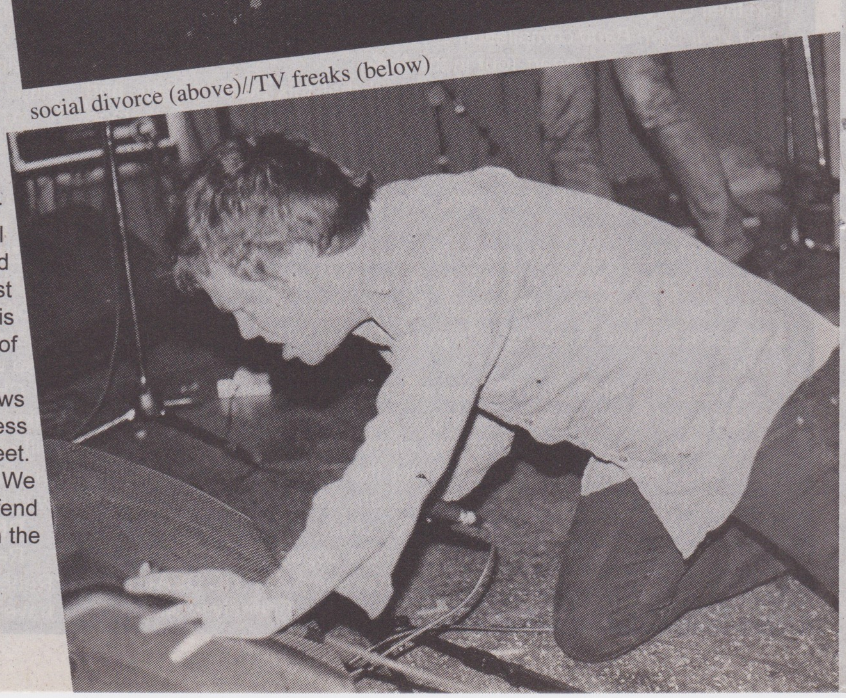
Lou's Control is also on CFMU on Wednesday afternoon from 3pm–5pm.

PUNK RECORD STORES

If you like punk, metal and reggae the best place to check out would be Hammer City Records. The shop is punk as fuck. 95% vinyl in a basement at 228 James N but you have to use the rear entrance off the Robert Street alley. Down the Alley and in the Pit – how punk is that? The shop has punk artists showing their art on a monthly basis. Jeff Beckman, Scott Bentz, Don Pyle, CORPUSSE, Donofthedead and the Chew and many more have all had great art shows. The store has also hosted several instore performances as well as a meet and greet with Handsome Dick Manitoba. Some of the instores have spilled out into the alley! The shop has a lot of local releases, zines and flyers for upcoming shows. This is a cool place to hang out and check out vinyl. Chris Houston, Mickey DeSadist, Jamie Problem, Dave Rave are amongst the punk luminary that drop by to hang out on a regular basis.

Crash Landing is another store that stocks some punk vinyl and a whole lot more, including clothes, musical instruments and accessories. Sue and Crash also rent practice space to local punk bands and sometimes host shows in their basement on Ottawa Street.


social divorce (above)//TV freaks (below)



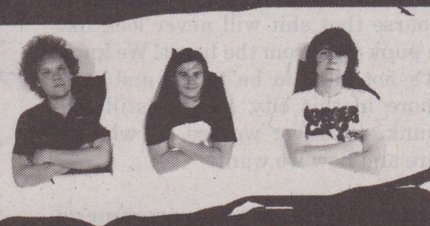
VENUES

The best bar to play in the city is This Ain't Hollywood, named after the FORGOTTEN REBELS' second LP. The bar is cool as hell and is by far the best sounding venue in town. This Ain't Hollywood hosts Sunday Slamfest, the monthly all-ages show held on the last Sunday of each month, organized by Hammer City Records. This bar has also been the home of REBEL FEST and hosts many of Rebel Time's shows.

Doors Pub is a small venue in Hess Village. They book shows regularly if you can stomach the jock, ICP, stupidity that is Hess Village —drinking and frat mentality all focused on one hellish street.

Okay folks, that is it for round one of our scene snapshot. We promise to check in before another 30 years pass. Until then Defend Hamilton, Eat Shit. There is a whole world of music to explore in the Hammer and they'll be even more by the time this hits print!

New DOUBLE 7 inch from the
Fleshlights



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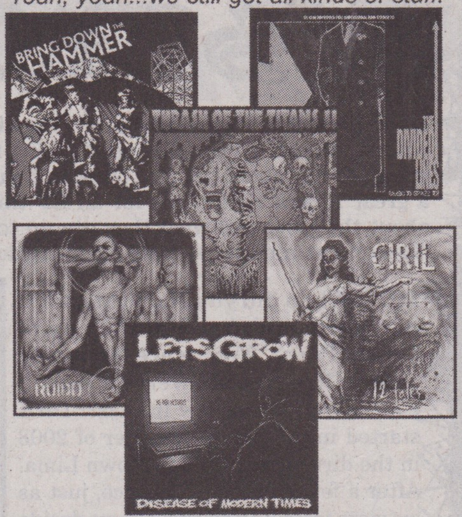

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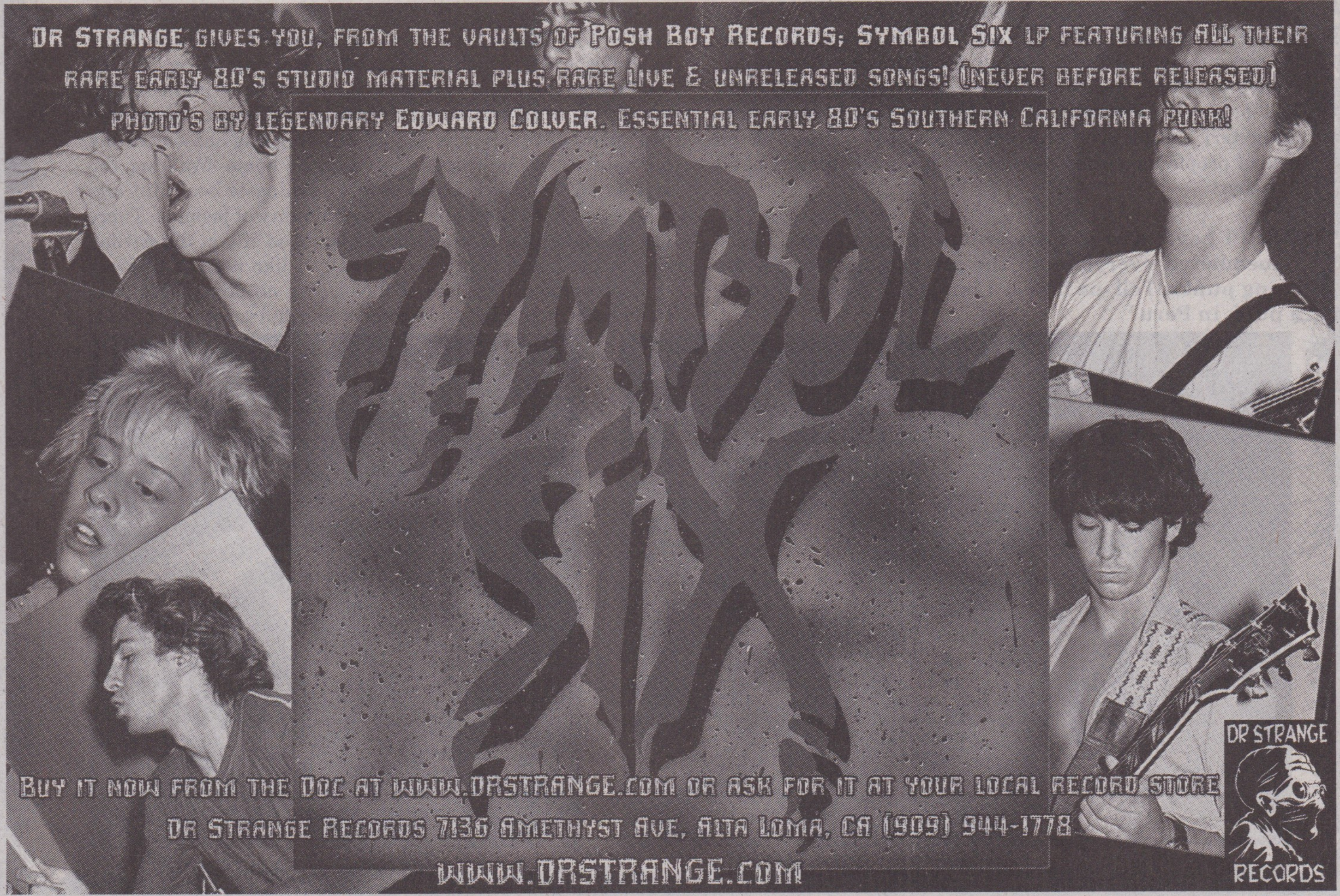


DESTRUYE, HUYE, KREA

DHK (Destruye Huye Krea) are from Lima, Peru, and are for sure the best band from Latin America. If you go to Lima, you will experience street punkers fighting for anarchy in any way possible. They are really active in their home city—they have things to say about being a punk in South America, doing shit-fi recordings and touring. They also put out an awesome tape, a great 7" and have plans for an LP this year. I conducted a short interview with Seve, guitarist and singer of DHK, to talk about the band and what they are up to. Let the world know about DHK, because they totally deserve it! As their tape says "Esto no es musica, es puto ruido hardcore punk!" Interview by Rafael "Cabeza", photos provided by the band.

MRR: When did you start this great hardcore punk band in the city of Lima, Peru? You were formerly called Dizpareunia weren't you?
How is everything, my friends?! DHK started in the bloody summer of 2008 in the dirty streets of downtown Lima. After a few months of absence, just as we were traveling elsewhere, we decide to restart the band. No, we weren't called Dizpareunia before, that was actually another band that we had done before. We realized that that band was over and we decided to start another band—another sound, another way of saying things, something different... but always claiming autonomy, punk and anarchy!

MRR: Do any of the members of DHK have any side projects?
I played drums for Ratas Rabiosas for a while. We recorded a rotten demo tape, we traveled and everything was good! But we are on hold for now, because the guitarist's hand is fucked up. The last band I played in was Distemper who also recorded a demo tape, but for now we are also on hold, while the drummer is traveling. I have a terrible desire to build a noisy "death-rock" band and a cumbia (traditional music from Latin America) band. [laughter] Those are other forms of noise I also love, but the lack of people interested here makes it hard to start a band like that!

MRR: I have been to Peru twice, once in Lima. I just remembered everyone on the street yelled at us for being punks. Tell me how is Lima now? How is it to be a punk in Peru?
Lima...it sucks! Things have not changed much in that aspect. Here and now punk is still shocking to people, that is how it is. Our attitude, our "visu" (short term for punk visual or punk aesthetic in Peru), is more relevant than ever. Despite these modern times of fashionable "Mohawks," the ripped jeans, charged hair and other things being bought. Most of the people use these visible punk expressions without the slightest knowledge of punk, but of course that shit will never look like a punk visu from the heart! We know it's not easy to be punk, and even more in this city, but we still like punk, wherever we are, as who we are and how we want!

MRR: Where do you recommend we visit and eat when we go to the ugly and chaotic Lima?
Whenever punks get to this city, we show the city as it is—not all those pretty pictures the government sells as the "City of Kings." Lima has big contrasts: from the finest neighborhoods, which incidentally are disgusting, to the slums and the suburbs, where poverty is seen immediately. We like to walk around La Parada and Cachina, where you can spend as much time as you want digging out something for your "visu" or things you need at home. Walking the streets of downtown Lima, where nothing is beautiful and where you have to be alert to any stupidity of people... There are so many places to go! [laughter] And if you dig eating, this is the place, because personally I like almost all foods that are made here, lots of flavor, lots of variety. Many of them have important nutritional value and some only give us

cancer. My mother is a great cook by the way. Great seasoning!

MRR: Does the shop Azko Social still exists? Please tell us a little about it.

Yes, Azko Social still keeps the fight and that is very important. It is the only store with a specific place where you can find punk and anarchist stuff, although sometimes I find things I do not understand, anyway... [laughter] Azko Social currently shares space with Mundo Acrata another distro "owned" by an anarchist friend. I actually don't know when Azko Social started, but I've known them for over eleven years and they continue spreading their ideas. I have many great memories and so many anecdotes about my friend Richi Morgue from Generacion Perdida who does most of the work at the store.

MRR: Where and how do you manage to create a sound as fabulous, momentous and corrosive as DHK?

We recorded *Primera Maketa* in our friend Guztrago's room, which has everything you need to build a demo tape as disgusting and despicable as we wanted it to be. He runs a small room recording space and does what it needs to be done. All those hardcore punk bands that have existed over the years influence us. They are too many to list here and from totally different sounds! But above all we love music that is honest and full of attitude!

MRR: Be punks and anarchists in 2012? Why?

Because when you adopt the punk in your life, you take it forever! That's what I decided a long time ago, the years go by but the attitude, the idea and the action does not die—it becomes strong and secure inside you. In all these years each one of us has learned a bunch of things from being punk, mainly to take control of our own lives—from there it all begins.

MRR: How was the tour in Ecuador and southern Colombia? Tell me!

We couldn't book any of our shows in Ecuador for our tour, but there were some punks living with friends of ours there and we had a blast! But anyway, we survived and arrived to Colombia. We played in Cali and Medellín, a cool experience. Knowing other realities, other punks and anarchists, also seeing other ways of living is always cool.

MRR: Seve, you make the wonderful fanzine Lima de Mierda (Shitty Lima). Tell me how did this punk and anarchist publication start? Anyone else in DHK make a zine?

I had a terrible desire to express myself, my feelings, share my nasty pictures and my experiences in Lima. Because I know that in some way or another something has happened to us in this crazy punk life. I have five issues of my zine moving somewhere on the planet. I photocopy everything, it is made entirely by hand, typewriter and a lot of effort. I love "cut and paste" zines! No, the rest of the band... they do other things. I'm the only zine punk in DHK.

MRR: Tell us a little about the punk community in Lima. I know the legacy of great punk bands during the "Rock Subterraneo" movement, but how are things now? Any bands that you recommend MRR readers to listen to? Any punk meeting points in Lima?

A punk community definitely exists here in the city, but there are not many punks. There is a call for punks, at least the ones I know, to be in the streets, be creative and fight back! There are some zines, some concerts, street activities and meetings... We set up the "Jornadas de Cultura Punk" (Days of Punk Culture), which gives continuity to the spread of anarchist ideas and is a place for punk records and zines. We also do the same thing on Saturdays at the street market/fair in a park in downtown Lima.

Yes! It's true that Peru had very good bands in the '90s and '80s, but still many of them played more typical, but great, punk rock. There were exceptions though—they also played hardcore! Fortunately the Lima punk community has always had a large amount of bands—mostly underground and some 100% punks. Currently the best bands are: Total Distopia, Distemper, Ratas Rabiosas, Desastre Social, Kuartos De Tortura as I can recall... The mythical "Kilka Jr" will always be a reference point for the underground and punk, but you can always bump into some street punk for sure!

MRR: DHK played with the great and mythical Narcosis. How was the experience?

For us it was like any other show, one of many in which we participate. It wasn't a "great" experience... We really like Narcosis, but do not feel anything special about that day. Narcosis is not what (perhaps) it once was.

MRR: You release a tape with Cintas Alta Intensidaz and an amazing 7" with Odio los Discos. What was the process like?

Both labels wanted to release our noise and we were more than happy about that. With Alta Intensidaz, we wrote the guitarist of Firmeza 10 for a trade and he turned out to be the distributor of the demo tape in the UK. About the 7" on Odio los Discos, we know him personally—he is from Lima, but lives now in the US. He was excited to release our 7", which we are very happy with...

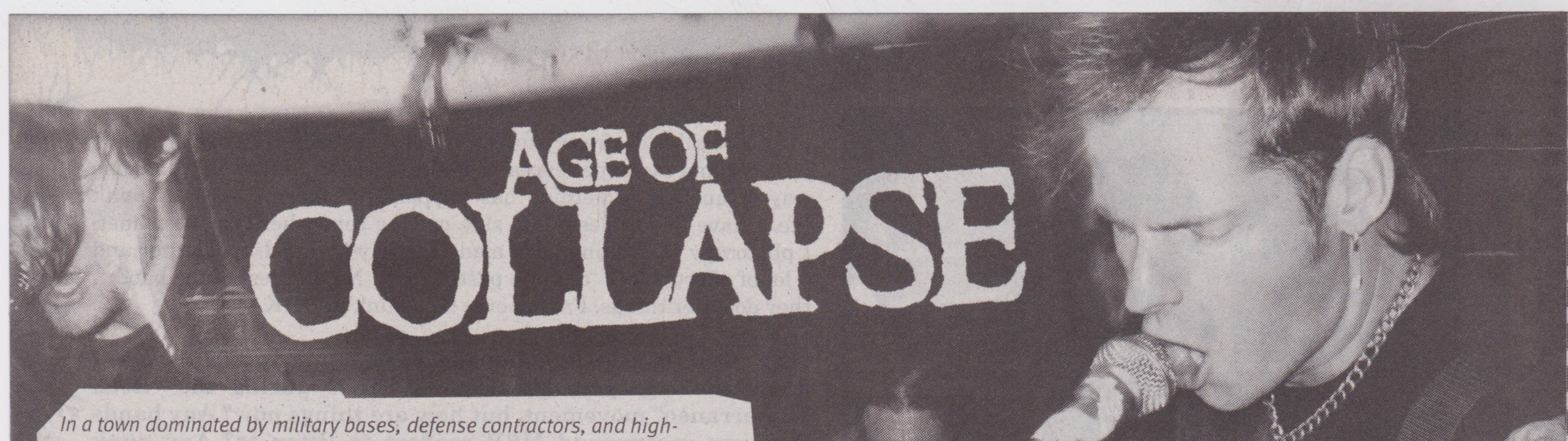
MRR: I just learned that La Vida es un Mus is releasing a DHK LP! Tell me a little about that.

Yes, it is true. Paco is set to release a DHK LP. We have to record and send him the songs. So he, with all the experience he has, can make us a proper release. In a few days we will have the recording set and see how all this turns out. For DHK, this is a luxury this event! Personally, I love vinyl!

MRR: What are the future plans, any tour? Please give your contact address and if you want to add anything, this is the time.

We plan on touring through the South of America next year. To *MRR* readers, let everyone know that punk is fighting back and very much alive! We do not want it to be just about the music, but rather that punk manifests in all shapes and in all possible forms. Greetings to all these regions and punks of the world struggling for anarchy! Whenever you want to take a break and check out this rotten city and its awful neighborhoods, we are here... Thanks for the interview, and who ever wants to contact DHK, just write to: repugnante_d@hotmail.com and we will gladly answer. Chaos and punk!

AGE OF COLLAPSE



*In a town dominated by military bases, defense contractors, and highways, San Diego's **Age of Collapse** is producing heavy and heartfelt crust that gives an expressive form to the deep harm and injury that underlies industrial civilization's smiling exterior. Their 2011 LP **Burden of Beast** and shows up and down the West Coast reveal a band approaching a well-worn genre with refreshing originality, nuance, and purpose. I got the chance to interview Age of Collapse a little while back and get some more insight into what they do and why they do it. Interview by **Max Lavine**. Photos by **Robert Hanna, Sydney Barnett, Jason Bang and Matthew Grant Anson.***

MRR: Names and roles, how long have you been a band, and where are you from?

Blaine: I play the bass. Sean and I are from Hawaii and have been playing in bands together for eleven years. Age of Collapse has been around since Spring of '08.

Sean: I play guitar, I grew up in Hawaii with Blaine, as he mentioned.

Xavier: I play guitar, grew up in San Diego and I've been in Age Of Collapse for over a year now.

Steve: I play drums. I mainly grew up here in San Diego. Been around since we started Age Of Collapse

MRR: Names like Age of Collapse and Burden of Beast come across as drawing people's focus towards themes like the suffering of the natural world in the face of the growth of capitalism. What goes into choosing names? Do you see this as an important aspect of the project or more incidental?

B: Our world offers plenty of material to keep writing pissed off hardcore about. [laughs] With Burden we wanted to write a concept album about human progress viewed through the eyes of the other inhabitants of our world. We tried to write songs that were open ended, so even though the album concept focuses on animals, every song should carry multiple meanings and be able to translate in different ways. I think the song names reflect that idea.

Sean: I personally feel that the name of the band along with the title of the album, is very important. We spend a good deal of time with titles of songs, albums and lyrics. I really like when all aspects of a band (name, sound, atmosphere, artwork, etc) come together in a way that is cohesive. I feel that when you achieve this you can create a feeling or an entity that has power and ambiance. I feel we try our best to become, or create that entity with our band.

X: We do a lot of after practice, discussions in the van. We make Sean turn down the Pentagram and we talk. We discuss song lyrics, song titles, riffs we like, riffs we don't like as much...all kinds of shit. Every aspect is important. [laughs]

MRR: Live and recorded your sound is extremely heavy and metallic, but overall has a very melodic and emotive quality that makes me think of European crust bands like Ekkaia. As people who have been listening to and playing punk and metal for a long time, how would you describe your sound? What have been some big points of reference for crafting it?

B: We try not to shy away from any influences no matter how weird they might be. We all listen to a bunch of different shit and just kinda let that flourish in the writing process. I don't know. Sean will probably come up with some ridiculous metaphor about mixing genres and then baking them into a cake, or something...

Sean: It's like we took a bunch of genres that we really like (classic metal, D-beat, crust, etc.), took the parts we love about them and used those to get what we wanted out of the sound we were trying to create. Like if you had all these ingredients that you know for a fact are delicious on their own and then decided they might taste good together. So you make a casserole out of them and ended up with a gourmet fucking dish! '80s Metal/ Crust Casserole! Mmmm...

B: Yep. [laughs] It seems like in the states ever since the late '90s bands have just been trying to get heavier and heavier to a point where down-tuning has almost become a crutch for lazy songwriting. I've always enjoyed the epic qualities of Euro-crust bands or NWOBHM bands, and have tried to implement them wherever I can. Bonus points if I can find somewhere in our songs to sneak in my New Order obsession.

X: I think having four people all drawing from a variety of different influences helps keep a good balance.

Steve: Yeah, all our ideas and influences are wide so it keeps it interesting. The challenge is not to go off the deep end with odd influences and crazy ideas. Everything has to stay in context. In my mind we're just punks trying to play metal really...and maybe a bit of Morrissey.

MRR: Your most recent release, the Burden of Beast LP, seems like the culmination of a change in your sound since, say, your split with Warscroll. How would you characterize this change? In retrospect, what are some factors that led in a new direction with songwriting and style?

B: Yeah, Burden of Beast was a huge step forward for us. For me, I think it was all in the mindset. Don't get me wrong, I fucking love crust, but in the past decade or so it has become a pretty monotonous affair, characterized almost entirely by D-beat and black and white photos of bombed out cities. We wanted to try out new ideas; take crust to a place it hasn't been before without completely alienating it. We arrived at lots of tempo-changes, rhythmic harmonizing guitar and out of place drumbeats. We wanted every song on the LP to be drastically different while still feeling like the whole album was a single drawn out thought. Just create something super genuine. If people like it—Cool. If it weirds people out...Cool.

Sean: The sound change had a lot to do with becoming a four piece, deciding to tune to D as opposed to standard tuning and in the time between albums we really progressed as musicians and songwriters. But I like the way Blaine said it better, so pay more attention to that. [laughs]

X: Emperor cab. [laughs]

Steve: Hah! Better gear does make a difference. I think we've gotten a lot closer and cohesive in our vision and in our musical relationship with each other. We've matured together and learned together.

MRR: Burden of Beast is also a fucking expansive record. How was the recording process for you guys?

B: We recorded a lot of it live, so it went fairly quick. Big Fish Studios is a wild place. There are platinum records on the walls from bands like Megadeath and Blink 182. [laughs] It felt weird being a shitty DIY band at such a renowned spot, but Dan kept the recording process super punk and Paul made us peanut butter smoothies...

Sean: Our Engineer, Dan Maier did an amazing job and busted his ass making it all possible. We are very thankful for that. Something I was really pleased with was how true to our live sound this record is. Like Blaine said, it was done mostly live, with very few additional sounds or effects. I'd say that our live sound is almost identical to the way the songs sound on the record. It's always a bummer when you see a band live and they sound super thin or disappointing compared to how they sound on record. I didn't wanna do that to people so I was thrilled our live sound translated so well to recording.

X: Yeah, Dan Maier is the shit! Usually recording is kind of stressful, but I had a lot of fun just hangin' in the studio, playing ping-pong and having safety meetings.

Steve: The only recording experience I've ever enjoyed.

MRR: Whenever I listen to you guys, it really strikes me how the lyrics about capitalism creating an apocalyptic crisis and the, well, apocalyptic and emotive nature of the music and the atmosphere it creates line up very closely. How do you see the relationship between the content of your lyrics and the feeling evoked by your music?

B: Writing lyrics has become something that we spend a lot of time on—just as much as writing music. I don't want to just bark out a bunch of lines that people are gonna head bang to. I want them to think about it or feel something. Connect with the music in a way that goes beyond just sound going into your ears. We're trying to say, "Look at what's going on around us. We're depressed and fucking pissed off...Aren't you?"

Sean: Age of Collapse is very much a vessel for the darker side of how we feel about the human condition. It's a type of catharsis for me personally—the tragedies of our species and our crimes against each other and nature way heavily on us. Sometimes the lyrics will steer the direction of the music, in order to evoke the emotions we felt while writing them. There is a lot of time spent making sure that the feel of the lyrics flows with the sound of the songs.

X: I think everyone needs/has an outlet for the frustrations endured in everyday life; this is ours.

MRR: San Diego strikes me as a fairly conservative town culturally and politically, but I know it has also been home to a lot of awesome DIY music over the years, the Che Cafe, etc. How would you describe the "state of the scene" in SD right now as a politically radical DIY band?

B: This is a question I could talk about for hours, but I'll try to keep it short since I'm sure MRR would rather fill their pages with more meaningful content than me whining about scene politics. Southern California is a weird place. A lot of bands don't really spend time perfecting their craft like they do in the Bay, PDX, Seattle or other West Coast towns. It's all about immediate gratification and fast riffs. Blame it on the weather; I guess everyone would rather just be at the beach. Currently, we don't have many venues or even heavy bands, but there is something about living in a town that wants you to fail so badly, that spawns some really great music. Our DIY scene is small, but tight-knit. People help each other out booking shows, putting out tapes and discussing politics. The more conservative the city gets, the more it makes kids want to start bands to tell San Diego to go fuck itself.

Sean: Blaine pretty much just nailed it. But we do have the best burritos in the country. [laughs]

X: Yup, and you also nailed it, Sean. [laughs]

MRR: Plans for upcoming tours? Recordings?

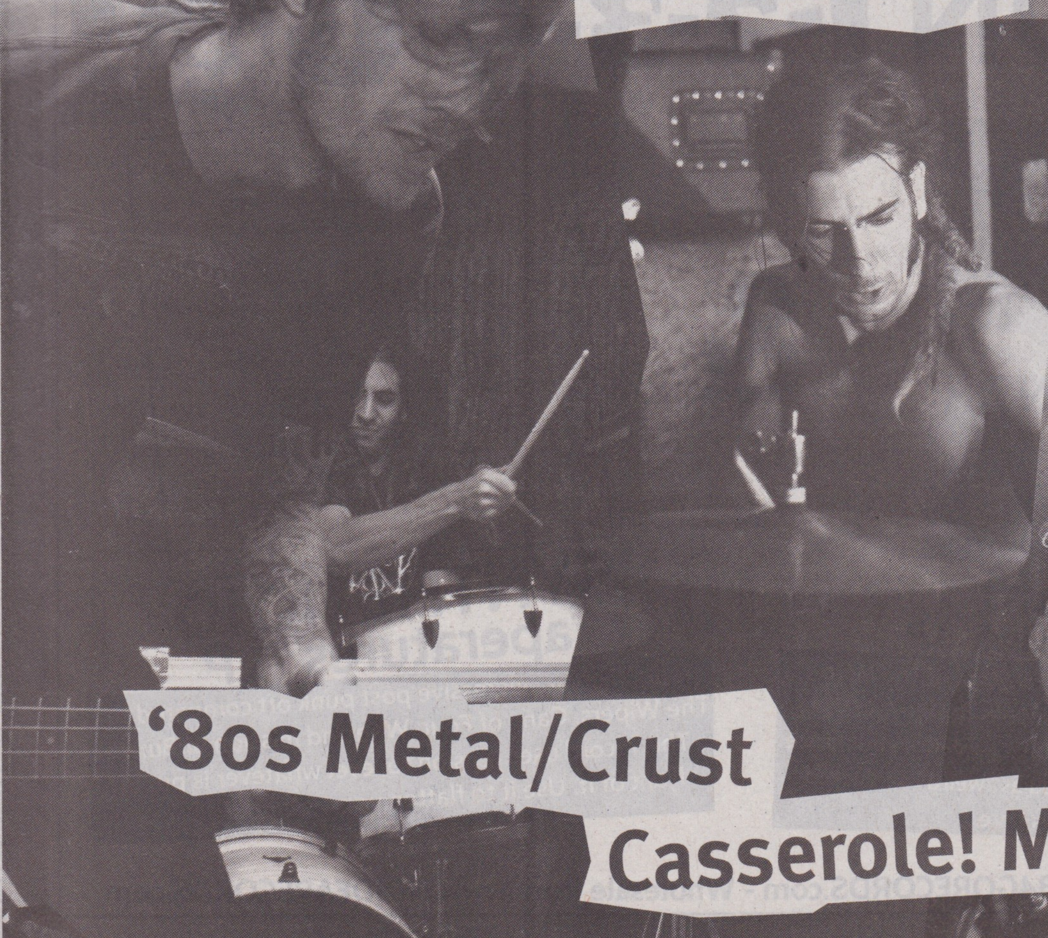
B: After two West Coast Tours earlier this year, we're writing again. We've been playing shows so consistently that we haven't had time to learn anything new, so it's fun and refreshing to finally be playing some new riffs. Hopefully this writing will lead into a new LP. Maybe a split. It's too early to say, but hopefully another release will be out by Spring 2013. On top of that we're trying to relocate the band, so we're looking into either a US or Europe tour by the end of next year.

MRR: Anything else people should know about Age of Collapse?

B: You can get the Burden of Beast LP from some exemplary gents over at Aborted Society records.

Sean: I'd like to mention our friend Joseph Sanchez who does all of the illustration for our band's artwork. Shirts, the album and patches, he always does an amazing job. We boss him around and send him on crazy artistic wild goose chases and he always delivers the goods. Thanks Joseph! Also would like a quick shout out to the Aborted Society team for being so amazing to us, to Alan Despotic for being our tour dad [laughs], and to Rachel from Murderess for letting us show up at like three or four in the morning to sleep in her house!

B: Fuck! I'll throw some in too. Definite thank you to the people who keep the gears turning and the shows coming in San Diego. Cop Grave, the Che cafe, Sydney and all the amazing bands in town.



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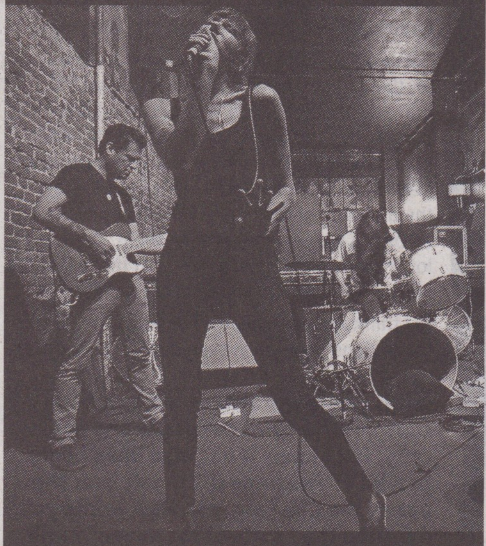

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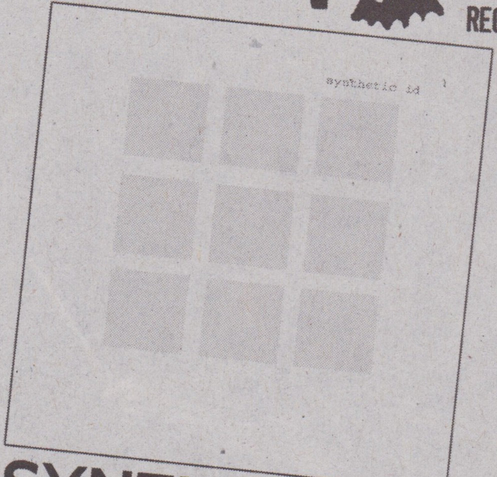

UZI RASH
"Coreless Roll Can-Liner" LP

End times art damage anti-rock. The rhythm of The Monks played by a bloodied miscreant who looks to Don Van Vliet Ed Sanders and Nikki Sudden for spiritual guidance and advice on mental health issues. Oft described as "weird" or "fucked". The Golden Dawn is here.

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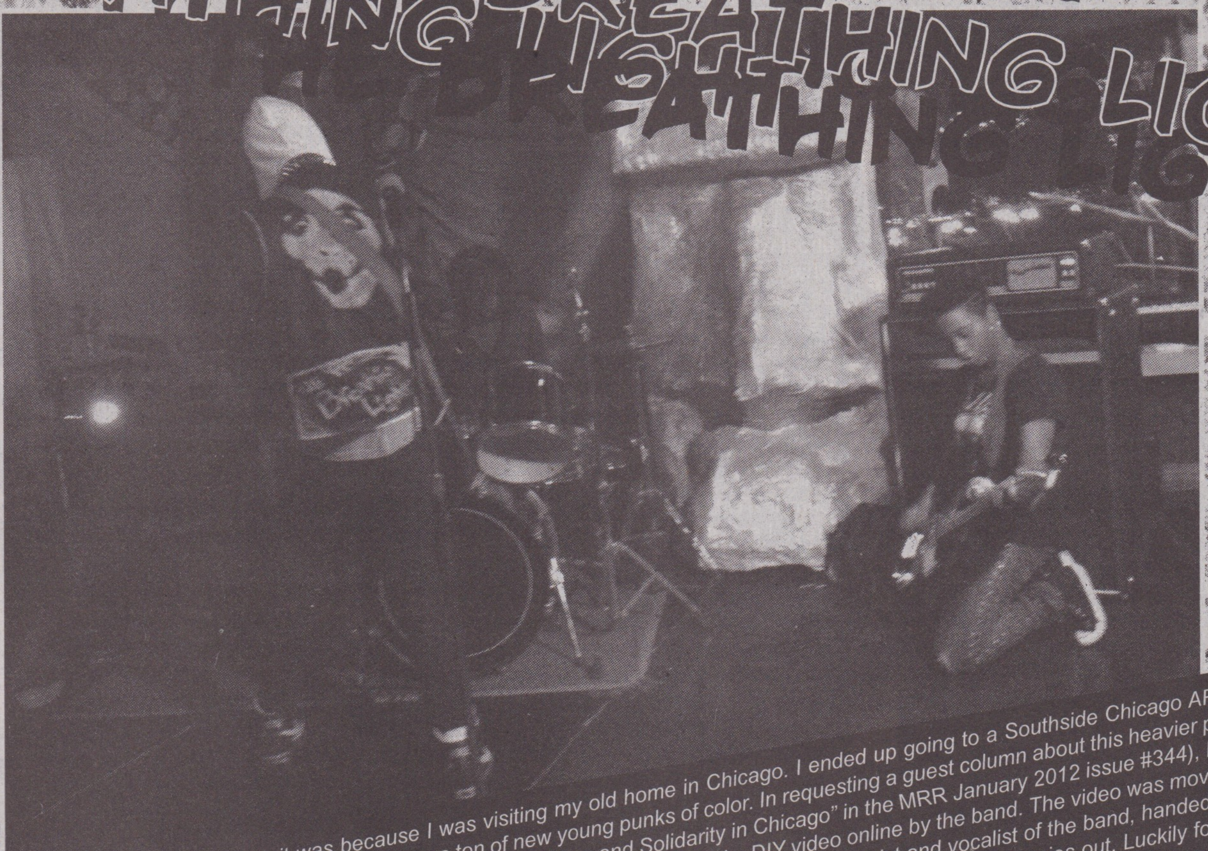


When I first heard of this band, it was because I was visiting my old home in Chicago. I ended up going to a Southside Chicago ARA benefit show up the street from my old house and I remember seeing a ton of new young punks of color. In requesting a guest column about this heavier presence (see the guest column by Monika Bella Negra "Black (and Brown) Punk Uprising and Solidarity in Chicago" in the MRR January 2012 issue #344), I was told that there was a punk band I had to check out called the Breathing Light. I searched and found a DIY video online by the band. The video was moving, artistic and creative, but the song I saw was more ethereal than punk. I had to see more. Last year, Yumi, the guitarist and vocalist of the band, handed me a stack of Breathing Light CD-Rs at the Chicago zine fest. Upon returning to SF, I listened to the CD-R and promptly handed the copies out. Luckily for me, the Breathing Light played a show on the POC zine tour project a few months ago and I finally go to see the chaos first hand. The Breathing Light is a three-piece playing noisy, sometimes thrash-y punk with post-punk and experimental moments. Meeting at a traditionally black college in Huntsville, Alabama, they have a lot to say about their experiences in the south. and thoughts on being black punks within black culture, the punk subculture and what it looks like when these worlds intersect. Not only are they opinionated and thoughtful young punks, but are also very clear about their looking to the future as much as the past to find their inspiration. With great pleasure I present the future of punk: The Breathing Light.

Interviews and Photos by Mariam Bastani.

Yumi Thecato: Guitar and Vocals, Camille Porter: Bass, Trey: Drums

MRR: How long have you been playing?

Yumi: We've been playing since 2008. The line up has been changing for a while, but everyone who has been in Breathing Light has been really cool and has brought something special to it.

MRR: The visibility of your band is striking, especially because of the lineage of black punk bands in this country. How do people approach you? What have been your experiences?

Trey: At some of our first shows in Alabama, people would always holler out, "BAD BRAINS! BAD BRAINS!" even though there were four people in that band and we were always a three piece. It wasn't really an insult, because bands like that inspire us, of course. If someone would have yelled out, "Fishbone!" we would say, "thanks, at least you are making that connection…" It has never been outright negative, but sometimes the underlying attitudes about our band have been—you can feel it. It's good that we are a band that can rock out and, still, we are an all black band—sometimes it's an anomaly in a saturated scene.

Yumi: Going down south and starting off…it was crazy at first, especially because we were playing at a historically black college. We were really trying to get the kids on campus to come to shows and try something different 'cause at the time there were a lot of black kids wearing skating sneakers and band t-shirts, but none of them had ever listened to the bands.

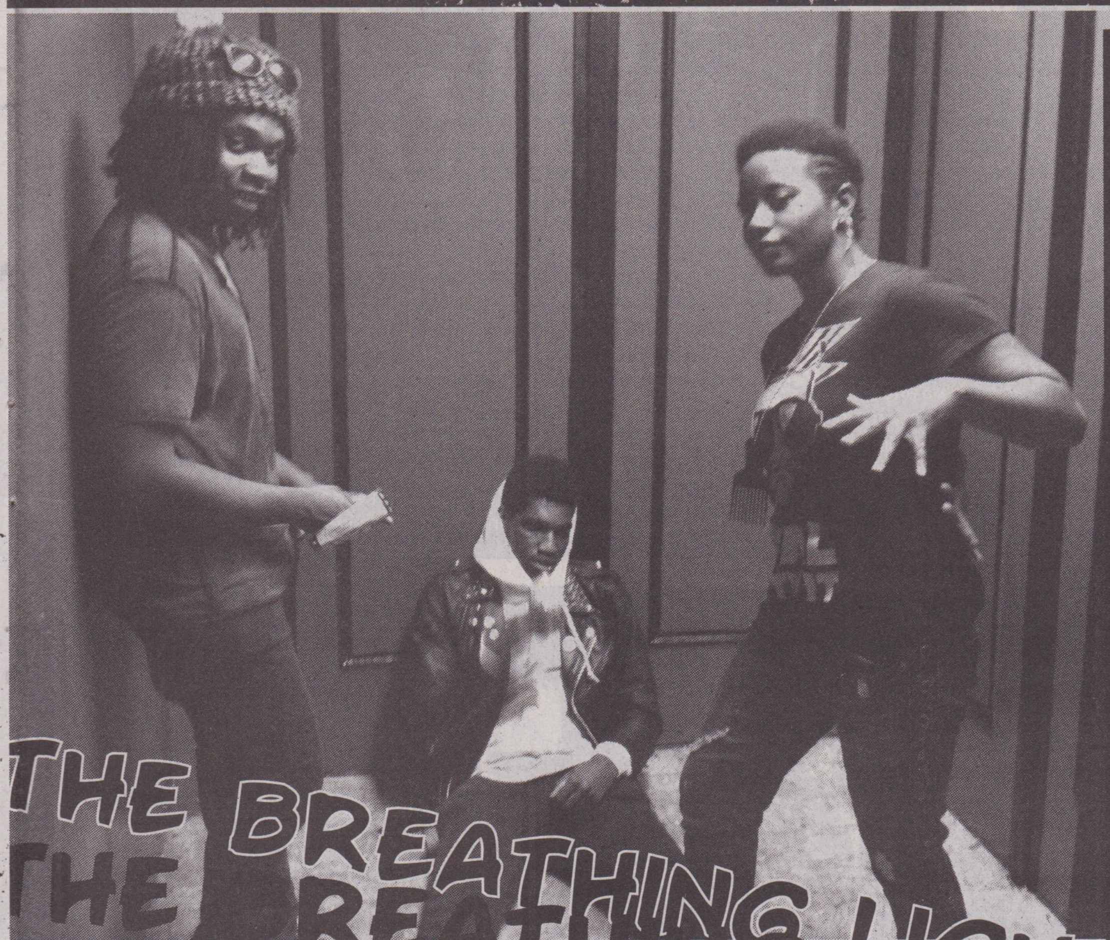
Trey: Around that time the whole "Party like a Rock Star" thing was getting real heavy. The funny thing was that most of the flack we ever got was from predominantly hip-hop listeners. It's the worst when it would come from that direction—we were made fun of because we like rock and punk, but they would be wearing a Black Label Society t-shirt just because it has skulls and guns on it and they have never even listened to a lick of the music. That would piss me off. You get that kind of static being in a band like this, but on the other side of things, traveling around with this band has been really fun because you get people dancing and tearing it up…it's awesome.

Camille: I am younger than the other two members and I actually didn't come into the band until 2010, but the reaction I got? Just being a female with a bass guitar on her back, I was looked at weird. I would have females and males of my same skin color looking like, "what you carrying that for?" When I would tell them I was in a "rock band" I would get laughs—full blown laughs! Like I just throwed a joke or something! What insulted me the most was when people would ask me, "So you a rock band…so you play like Little Wayne?" I just wanna hit them! [laughter] No disrespect to another artist just for the sake of it, but—*No, he doesn't play*. It would be different if compared to some one like Jimi Hendrix or Miri Ben-Ari; she plays strings…

Trey: What about Bootsy Collins?
Camille: Right! Even Bootsy! But the lack of information that people have, especially young black people, about the greats who were doing this "rocknroll" thing before it was "rocknroll"—what are you all paying attention to? Mostly people who listen to techno, rap and some R'n'B—but mainstream stuff—looked me at real funny. When I came back to Chicago it was different, Yumi started taking me to punk shows and I fell in love with it since day one.
Trey: It's a really good feeling when you are in an all black punk band, riding down the street blasting X-Ray Spex in the middle of A & M campus. [laughter] Here we are in a Camry blasting all these wild tunes with saxophones. Folks are just stopping and saying "Oh my god, what the hell is going on?!" At that moment they are more scared of what is in that car than they are of each other.
Camille: Yesterday we were going down Ashland with the Memorials turned all the way up. All I know is that people started staring into the car, more then they were before, when they saw black faces. All that day we were getting looks. It's like, man, fuck it, let's play some loud shit.
Trey: You know Chicago…you've got architectural beauty right next to poverty stricken neighborhoods were kids are getting killed daily. You got folks walking around oblivious to that. So when you got kids coming from that side of town, that have been exposed to those things, just flying through the rich part of town blasting that music it makes you feel good, you know what I'm saying? 'Cause you are a part of something, you have something to offer and you have something different coming down the streets other than Miley Cyrus or some horrible shit like that.
Camille: The mainstream cuts kids off. They don't know about rock or punk, or things like skateboarding. The other day I see this little girl who's two or three years old and she is walking with her mom. I am with my friend who has a skateboard. I say, "Ay, let me get the skateboard…" and I jump on and start coasting. I didn't hit any tricks, I don't know any, but the reason I did that was to make an impact on the kid. She looked at me and automatically said, "Mommy, I want a skateboard!" Doing something like that, especially as a female, is cool. Just do something different, something positive because a lot of these little girls, and I have friends who were these little girls, are seeing people who just shake their butts and think that stripping is the only way to make it. Having no options is destructive. There is way more positivity and creativity in different scenes, like the punk scene. People need to find out about that, especially the younger generation, especially females.
Trey: Underground music is a good place for people to gain some kind of knowledge about what's going on in the greater world. I look out and see that people are clueless to what is happening around the globe. I've never seen any other genre put the spotlight on it as much as underground music—thrash, punk—we can throw names all day, but it's been a great resource to get information about what's going. I just recently got two albums, one's from a mainstream dude and one is DIY. The mainstream album is all grandeur, talking about how rich they are and I'm thinking, "I just spent twenty bucks on something that tells me how poor I am." I spent five bucks on a punk record and get 23 songs that not only let me know what's going on, but also giving me something to feel good about when I'm putting them on—I don't feel like, "just talking about bitches and rims again…sweet" [laughter] "cocaine that they never sold…sweet…"
Camille: "I shot somebody…sweet."
Trey: "I saw it on MTV…sweet." [laughter]
Camille: I'm sorry we are taking up all this time on this question.

MRR: No! This is about your band, your friendship. You guys seem really tight. How long have you known one another?
Trey: We all met in weird ways. We'd be at shows and we'd see each other across the room and just be like, "Oh! You too?"
Camille: My brother!
Trey: The first conversation I had with Yumi was about Afro-punk. Years later one of my band mates of the band I was in at the time moved to Israel, so I was thinking about starting another band. Just then Yumi asked, "Hey do you wanna drum for Breathing Light." It was awesome. I met Camille at one of our shows we were trying to get her into, but we couldn't. Later she ended up in the band. It's always been fun playing with these guys; it's always music talk, knowledge and good times—even if Camille does beat me up all the time.
Camille: Wait a minute a disclaimer first of all…
Yumi: violent as hell…violent as hell…
Camille: Do you not deserve it?

MRR: Who's from the south?
Yumi: I am from Chicago, but I do have family down there and I went to school there.



THE BREATHING LIGHT

THE BREATHING LIGHT
THE BREATHING LIGHT

That was interesting…Huntsville, Alabama. When I started going to shows and met Trey it was the end of that areas punk scene. It was weird because the Huntsville scene had a new wave revival, now there is mostly post punk and garage going on…

Trey: When we first met we were straight outta high school reading *CrimethInc* and *Maximum Rocknroll* that we could only get from Books-a-million *if* they had it. Otherwise, we could never get a hold of those things. We were reading this stuff along side a young DIY scene where we could make our own zines and albums, but somewhere along the line all that stuff kind died.

It's sad, because there are a lot of people in Huntsville wanting to play music and really want some place where they can let their emotions out. They don't want to go to a garage or Indy show where you can't move around. We went from being able to dance, slam, mosh to being kicked out for dancing. Sometimes going to shows in Huntsville is like going to a graveyard. When you lose the energy for music what's the point in paying to go stand in a room and watch somebody give their heart to you? And you are able-bodied? That's an insult to you and the artist. Death to garage rock and Indy rock—I don't give a fuck. I'm tired of that shit. *I want energy back in music.*

Camille: One thing I am learning as far as the business world is concerned. It honestly, truly is about the greed and money. There are a lot of promoters out there that I don't respect, I am just throwing that out there, that control these venues and restrict people.

Trey: Seriously, they kicked us off a bill in Huntsville because I had locked my keys in my 1989 Taurus at the practice space. I am sitting out there for an hour and a half freaking out 'cause not only are we gonna be late to the show, but I am not going to be able to drive there. The promoter is calling us saying that if we aren't here at a certain time, we are getting kicked off the show… There is no playing later—there is no playing at all... That's how things are run there. I could have had my leg cut off and it would still have been the same thing. People ask why doesn't a certain band play at a certain venue anymore? It's all in the way you treat people.

Camille: It could be more of a race issue. It probably more than likely is a race issue…

Trey: I don't think it was.

Camille: You don't?

Trey: It's a scene issue. It's the sound that they're against its not the faces that they are against, it's the type of music. The loudness, I don't know what happened to young people, but apparently loud music isn't good for anybody anymore.

MRR: Why do you say it's a race issue, Camille?

Camille: Being in the south I didn't see a lot of acceptance amongst "Caucasian" people, there were no open arms to darker skinned people. In the music scene, like Trey says, it was probably lesser of a race issue, but it was definitely tied into it.

Trey: I didn't see it as a race issue at all. Huntsville, Alabama is far past that. In the south you have racist jokes, but that doesn't necessarily mean someone's an active racist—nobody was yelling, "nigger" at us. In this case I think it was more of a social thing. Music there has become less sonic and more social—it's a cool kid thing, it's a cliqued up thing. You look at people who have the money in our city, who get the videos and get the records pressed—they have the cash to do this and they all got friends who have the money to do this.

Breathing Light has always been on the outside of that because of where everyone was located. You know, there some of us located out at A & M, yet there are kids who don't know about A & M, just like kids at A & M didn't know about shows down in Huntsville. I think it was more scene politics. I could say it's a race issue, but it's too easy of an explanation.

Camille: We just look at it differently because we have been there at different times and for different lengths of time.

Yumi: My experience with race in Alabama has been all over the place. When I first got to A & M I went to some NAACP meetings and met the NAACP president. He told me later on that the year that I got there in '05 there had been a Klan rally in Athens. The NAACP had gone out to see them and shit, because they had never seen a Klan rally before, but they traveled two hours to Athens to see it.

Trey: Let me clarify, the Klan is in Alabama; don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that. Regarding the issue of music in Huntsville, I feel like its more threatening thing to see any one of any color doing something other than what is going on the popular scene. When you are in the garage scene and you come out flippin' hip-hop or live freestyles, that's dangerous to other bands. That's not popular and it's going to infringe on shows if people start picking up on that. If you've got a band that is doing punk, doing thrash and throwing some post punk in there like we do, that's gonna mess with people in the scene. If you have a typical set you will do really well in Huntsville, but if you do some polyrhythms or come outta left field on someone, you are gonna throw people off—they are not going to *want* to be down with what you're doing that easily. Eventually

they will when they get tired of the old mess that is going on. I don't think it's so much of a race thing in that scene. If you are different—they don't want that around

Yumi: I got a question for you, G… Remember that time when we had that show at A & M and Cancer Slug came—the kids that came with them were like, "I dunno about A & M, G…" I got that feeling when they came.

Trey: You gotta think about all they're hearing on the news…

Yumi: That's what I mean! That's the problem. A & M was always in the news for bad shit and that *is* a racial issue. If there was a fight, a fire, a mugging...

Camille: You never heard anything positive about A & M.

Yumi: It was always in the news! We had so many good things happen at A & M and none of *that* stuff got in the news, but as soon as anything bad happened… I saw news trucks circling; I saw them by my door. News people talking to campus kids on camera… Where is our press? We didn't have any press at that school! Where is our representation? They sound have been there. Those news people, they didn't give a fuck, they just came there to put us on the news on blast, but you never heard you never heard about UAH.

Trey: Until a teacher went in with a gun and started shooting people!

Yumi and Camille: That's what I'm saying! That's what I'm saying!

Camille: It's point of view. Trey, you have grown up there your whole life, so I mean it's not just, "oh they just know you," but I was there for only a short time for my freshmen year in college and admittedly I wasn't around a lot of Caucasian people, but some of the few I was around...I didn't get happy looks. I didn't get the "good mornings."

Trey: You can't have that happen to you and be mad about it.

Camille: I mean I'm not about to—

Trey: If some one yells shit at me, its time to fight. Someone comes to me and looks at me cross, it's time to confront that. Yeah, people know me, but they also know I'm not up for taking shit. I will question you. A guy from my old band, he is half white half Jamaican, he would say stuff like "nigger" all the time and I'd be the only one to challenge him on it. You have to confront that stuff just as nasty as they come at you with it. There is no acceptance of any of that shit. If somebody comes to you and says, "Nigger," fuck it—it's time to see what kinda nigger this is. It's not even about anger, there is no "but," it has to be taken care of right then and there.

Yumi: That's why a lot of kids never came to A & M to start shit because if they tried to they would have been a whole bunch of black kids from all over the country, and some of these kids are in gangs, would whip they ass and make them go back to where ever the fuck they came from. If you were the only black kid somewhere else in Alabama, you'd hear some shit you would never hear if there were more black people around you. You know… [pointing at Trey]

Trey: I am from Huntsville…look at the demographics of the schools I went to; I have heard and seen all of that before.

Camille: This is a true Breathing Light conversation now…

Trey: This is exactly a Breathing Light conversation! But it's true, it is! It's all in the way you deal with it and if you come up around it in your face constantly eventually you say "fuck it" and start fighting it.

MRR: Camillle is a little person and a lady—that doesn't mean you can't fight, but there are limitations…

Camille: There is a time and place for everything. When it's blunt, Trey is absolutely right. You [Trey] have had to face it more than I have had to face it. You guys know that I have grown up predominantly around Mexicans and blacks so I didn't have to deal with the issue of head on racism, but mostly external racism with the looks and whispers depending on where I was at. In Huntsville, the few white people that I did come in contact with would look at my black friends and me real crazy. When I had a guitar, I would get real funny looks. Sometimes I got compliments. When I was with this guy [pointing to Yumi], we got looked at real funny by white, black, everyone. As far as experiencing racism in Huntsville, that is my personal opinion and I stand by it. I am not saying that about everybody and I am certainly not saying that every Caucasian person is racists or feels that way.

Trey: It's more angering when people of my own race would start shit with me. First of all, Breathing Light started at ground zero, we started in the south. Look at the history. Bullshit is gonna come from the opposite race, but when it comes from your own, it hurts even more. When you're wearing Vans or some "odd" shoe that isn't a Nike or a Jordan you start hearing, "Oh, he wants to be a rockstar" or "He wants to be white," he wants to be this and that—that's almost twice as angering than being called "nigger." Do they not see I am trying to be me? You are trying to be you and I am trying to be me. And you are going against me saying that I am trying to be another race when that's not even the issue.

Yumi: I remember going to lunch one day and seeing this black girl—I, at the time, being the only black kid that was really into rock at A & M—I saw her with this shirt on. I was like, man, I dunno, but I went up to her anyway and asked her if she liked rock and she was like," Hell No!" I was so hurt! [laughter] But the thing is I understood it because you have been conditioned to dislike things that aren't made for you. If you go into a scene like a punk scene here that is predominantly white and they are not used to black people, you are gonna get a lot of weird looks and that is going to deter a lot of kids of color to participate because its like, "dang, I don't belong there. Damn, I need to be with people that are like me and get me so, I'm going to adopt this or that." Even if it's shit you don't like.

Trey: I always felt like the punk scene was a good place to explore those questions. I came to the Huntsville scene when it was awesome. My best friend was a Jewish dude. I used to go to fucking temple with him all the time. I met the Rabbi and all that. There were a lot of people in that scene of different cultures who were accepting and gave me a lot of mental jewels along the way—a lot of people that supplemented my life. So I am never going to step into a situation and immediately be like "this is a racist situation," I have to dissect it before I make any rash decisions. It could be, but a lot of times there is more behind it. It's not that simple all the time. Growing up around all these different types of people all my life has made it hard for me to just simplify complicated cultural situations.

Camille: You're right, it's rooted in so much more. A lot of these minds are warped—black, white, whatever. They are warped because society pushes what group of people you belong to according to color—This is what you *need* to do, this is what you *want* to do. Now-a-days different is the new cool so shit like wearing skinny jeans is acceptable—it's history repeating itself. I'm pretty sure eventually we are gonna go back to wearing super duper loud, bright colors like Parliament used to do, but you have to ask: what is pushed by society? What does a group of people want to pick up now? What do they want to follow? What if people were individuals and their minds were open, open to try new things, talk to new people and not be afraid?

That's one thing about our generation, we are not communicating; we are losing communication. We don't like to talk, even on the phone anymore. If we have to write a letter, we aren't going to do it! If we put away that fear, a lot of those walls can be broken down as far as

race and culture and everything. Its cliché, but its true: what you don't understand is what you are afraid of. That's the problem. I am at a point now that I don't care is someone is a different color or differently-abled, I will go up to you talk to you just like any other person, I will talk to you like you are my own mother, and I love my mother. Shouts out to the lady! It's putting away that fear and talking to someone, it's the greatest to pull from those experiences. Like Trey said, you don't know what you will find out from someone or what you can learn or what could possibly save your life or just open you up.
Trey: I've always felt like the things that are going on in the world right now there are so many other much bigger things than someone being racist. We got people blowing their heads off on the live news, we've got videos pissing off entire cultures. We have people being hung and strung from bridges and shit. Fuck if someone is gonna call me nigger or have a problem with me because I'm any other race. Goddamn it, I am worried about the whole I'm not worried about this miniscule shit. There are bigger things that we could be on our way to fixing. We need to get over this small stuff that's not gonna matter. Is all this small stuff gonna matter if disaster strikes?
Camille: My point is opening your mouth and speaking to people. If you wanna know what that person thinks…go ahead and ask them! If you are interested about knowing about a person's culture, open your fucking mouth and ask. Have some sense, tact, and manners, and don't be a complete asshole. If you are curious about, why, when, how, go ahead and ask the person, you never know what response you will get! I am not gonna stand there and talk to my friends about you if I wanna know where'd you get your jacket from? I am not afraid, I am gonna ask. You can respond on one of three ways, say yes, say no or say nothing. You are either gonna be rude or not, that's that.
Yumi: I think a lot of older people don't talk to younger people and I don't like that, especially when kids are taking over positions where the older generation is already established. When kids get into these positions and no one has taught them what to do, what the fuck is gonna happen? You've got to talk to people and you gotta talk to younger people. You can't look at every young person as a punk or a slacker; they are the ones that are gonna be taking care of you when you are in diapers in the hospital. I don't know man…I don't know about the future…
Trey: We need to find a way to connect all the bonds that have been broken over the years. Somewhere we can have hope of making something significant happen in our history. What have we grown up seeing? War, death, censorship, it's stifling and at some point it gets to you. It has served to affect the way we deal with each other in everyday life. It's not all bad and it's not like we don't have any hope left. There are still a lot of things to be done, progress to be made. To be honest, I am happy to be here talking with all of you, with my friends, playing music—this is what everybody needs in their life to make it worth something.
Camille: Its true, hope is not lost. I see that in my little sister. She is a junior in high school and she and her friends are considered the weirdoes—I like that! She makes me proud because this kid will do her own thing and not give a fuck. She has always been that way.
Yumi: Especially in Dalton of all places!
Camille: The 60419. Dalton is a south suburb of Chicago one that especially on the low end, meaning that if you just cross the street, there is crime. Respects to my little sister and her friends, they are the kids that do their own thing. They don't have it as hard as any kid who ways trying to be different in my generation, but I know these kids are open minded and open to accepting different ideas and music.
Yumi: We saw it last night!
Trey: We were out on the corner just doing a little cipher and this eight-year-old dude steps up. He is listening to his freestyle, to these beats and we were just rapping and rapping. He was like, "You guys record?" And Camille said, "Not the rap stuff. Hey do you spit?" And he was like, "Oh you know...kinda…" He got real bashful. We hit a beat and this kid went off. My jaw was on the floor. I didn't even think about rhyme patterns like that. This kid is already cool G rap already. Damn!
Camille: The thing about these kids is that they need people like us, like you guys, to be talking to them. Just three days before the show I went to my old junior high. A kid was sitting down about to get suspended or something because she pushed a girl. I started talking to her about school and I told her to just leave the goofy people alone, the ones that are gonna hold you back. I told her, "guess what, you stay in school and you do what you want to do and you focus—it's gonna pay out, there is a reward." This kid gave me a hug. It was just love. I love talking to these kids, they actually listen when you talk to them like they are humans! I've had a lot of older people who have turned out to be mentors throughout my life 'cause they actually dealt with my bullshit to a degree, but they actually talked to me like I was human—not a little sister or a niece. That's all I really needed—someone to actually give a fuck.
Trey: If you think this generation is doing something wait on the next one. The next one is gonna be off the chain. Folks like my little brother, your little cousins, your family, all that—it's gonna be some shit. These are gonna be some really dangerous intelligent kids. [laughter] I am exited about it.
Yumi: It's gonna be interesting, the kids coming up now. When they do stuff it's so different and unexpected. You didn't know they had it in them. What's gonna happen when they become our age?

MRR: How old are you guys?
Yumi: Oh man…25
Trey: 23.
Camille: 20!

MRR: Do you think that people older than you look at you like that?
[laughter]
Everyone: uh... um...
Trey: Yeah they do! And you can see it! There are places like the after hours library in Huntsville that stayed open till like 3 o'clock in the morning and their moniker was "we read banned books." I was able to go there and read, ask for advice and catch all kinds of knowledge that I wouldn't have been able to get in a regular library. I grew up watching their shows and do what they do. I learned a lot from them. A lot of the stuff we do now is really inspired by this people, if not for people like Rita Burkholder of Chris Dalton we wouldn't have realized, "You got a burner? You got a microphone? Record you music and put it out, don't wait for anybody else! You wanna do a show? Manage it yourself!" The generation above us has always been a huge supplement to what we were doing. I really appreciate the people who turned me on to a lot of this stuff.

MRR: Any last words?
Trey: I'd like to add that Maximum Rocknroll, along with my friend David Hale, were the two things that really sparked me as a kid from listening to straight Metallica to the Vandals Christmas album. [laughter] Seeing pictures in *MRR* of some craziness like somebody shitting on somebody's face and thinking, "I wonder what that sounds like!" and realizing that people can get punk records so easily—just to be able to get that in my city where there are no other mags like that…Thanks.
Yumi: Thank you to all those who supported us when we started. I was into rock when I was a kid, but Huntsville was the first time I started going to punk shows and it was one of those places and times where I finally felt welcome—even though we all looked different, it was cool. There was a dude I went to school with named Jonathan, shout out to him. He was this tall white guy that had on a Bad Brains t-shirt at A & M and I was like, "I gotta talk to this dude 'cause he knows stuff." I went up to him and he took me to Birmingham, to my first punk show—Against me and Epoxies and I forgot who else. But it was those people who kept me going to shows and telling about shows and making me come out. I started going on my own, but if it weren't for people like that, opening up and talking and welcoming me, I wouldn't be where I am now. Everybody, even in the punk scene, if you see kids talk to them, Black, White Asian, Indian…just talk to them 'cause you never know how the punk community and that kind of friendship can effect their lives. So, shout outs and keep on going, yo.
Camille: Everybody who comes out to shows or tries to come out to shows or loves punk music, kudos to you and we love you. We are ever gracious to events like the POC zine tour, Black Dot festival, Black and Brown fest, all of the coordinators and those that take part all the bands, all of those who come out and support—because building communities is the most important thing—we love you guys!
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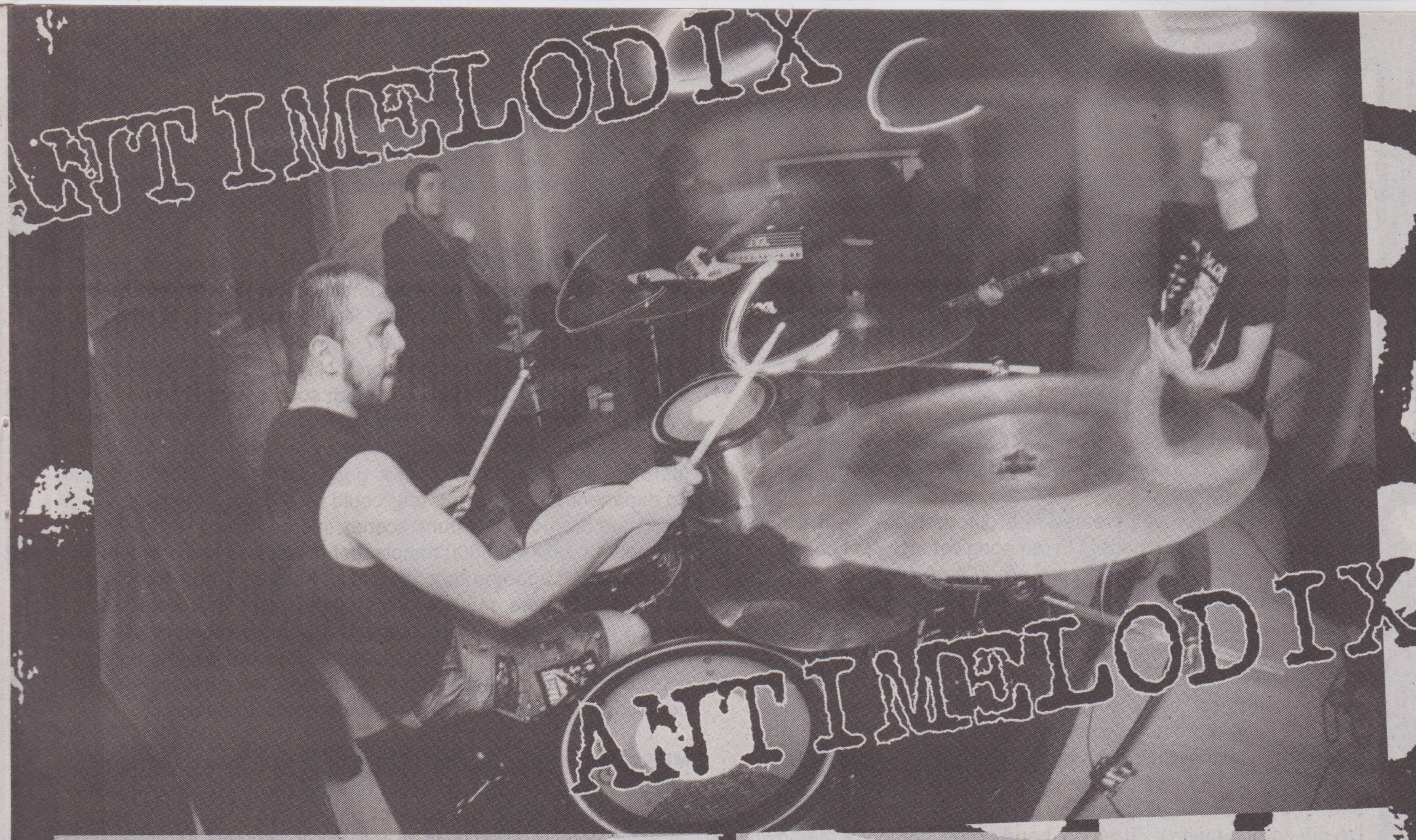

I stumbled upon Russian crust/hardcore band Antimelodix amidst Puntalarock 2011. I have to admit that their band name sounded a bit silly, but for some reason I found myself in the audience without even knowing what they sounded like. Well, their gig was among the best performances I saw that weekend, so I had to buy their Hellfuck 2011 EP and Hellfuck 2009 album. Later I contacted them for an interview, which was published in the first issue of Finnish Ajatuksen Valo zine, which was released in the spring of 2012. Now that zine is sold out, but I think honestly that Antimelodix deserves a larger audience in the pages of MRR. The interview was made via email from August 2011 to September 2011. They have worked on a new record after the interview was made.

Interview by Jouni Parkku. Photos by Alexey Barimov

MRR: First of all, would you like to introduce your band? How and why did Antimelodix get started in the first place?

Sanya: We are Antimelodix. We started our activity five years ago in Petrozavodsk (Petroskoi). The band consists of members from different local bands such as Only One Truth, Satana Kozel, Volosa, MAAA. All of these bands played absolutely different music, for example hardcore, metal, noise, punk etc., but we wished to play another kind of music. So we started to rehearse and in December we played our first show together with our friends Distress. Later some members left the band and we invited guys from Minuala to join Antimelodix. Now, it is very difficult to analyze our music style, but I think it is influenced by hardcore, metal, D-beat and so on.

Kolja: I started Antimelodix with Igman who was my bandmate from Only One Truth, and with my good friend Alex, the owner of Headnoise records. I played guitar and did the vocals, Alex was supposed to play bass and Igman played drums. After a few drunk rehearsals Igman took the bass duties and we invited our friend Giga to sing. First songs were pretty raw and dirty, representing total D-beat mayhem. Then my brother decided to help us with the vocals. We changed our line-up a few times, then we invited a couple of guys from Minuala to play with us, also Mr. Magister joined the band. Here is our current line-up:

Sanya – vocals
Mr. Magister – guitar
Chester – guitar
Dima – drums
Kolja aka Mr. Metalpunk – bass/backing vocals

Why did we start this band? Hm, I have always liked to play some primitive and dirty music. That was the main goal in the very beginning of our musical career, ha-ha. Now it is some kind of weird heavy rock'n'roll influenced D-beat hardcore punk and old school metal.

MRR: What are your most important influences, both musically and lyrically?

Sanya: As for me, my music preferences are situated between Johnny Cash and Napalm Death—album SCUM, Terveet Kädet and I Walk The Line…etc. Yes, I love Finnish punk/hc bands a lot. For many years I soaked in different kinds of music like a sponge and that led to what we have now in Antimelodix, because also I take part in creating our music. Now our lyrics are filled with mystical and political elements, social disposition and visions of human collapse, historical events and breaking news… it is a personal vision of the world and events, which happen around me. But it doesn't mean that my mind is restricted only to these things. Besides Antimelodix lyrics I also write short stories and poems on a wide range of topics, and they are not always so pessimistic as our band's lyrics. They can be really positive and sometimes sarcastic. I don't know the situation in other countries, but in Russia musicians usually pay too much attention to song lyrics. We are not so focused on lyrics, but now in our songs we use Russian language only because it helps us to express our feelings better.

MRR: Your first album was named Hellfuck, so was the new EP. Only difference in the name is the year. Why did you want to keep the name same?

Sanya: Maybe it is our strange tradition… I think we'll keep this name and this tradition in future.

MRR: Your music has progressed into a much more melodic direction. Was this a strict decision to do so, or was the change natural?

Sanya: Well, I think it happened accidentally. It is quite boring to play in only one way, so we started to put more melodies into our songs, but we still have a lot of heavy riffs and so on. I don't know what kind of songs we will compose in the future, maybe more metallic, maybe more punk stuff…let's see. We do what we just want to do, nobody tells us how to play our shit. It is totally our shit and I'm proud to be a part of it, ha-ha!
That's how it's supposed be, right?

MRR: Well, there is quite a lot of melody in your songs, so IWTL as an influence isn't that far fetched. How would you describe the song writing process? How are the songs born?

Sanya: Every song was created in a different way, so it's quite hard to find a common pattern in our song writing. But I can surely say it's our common work, the product of a collective mind. Actually we are not in a constant process of songwriting, we do it only when we are in the mood for that. So, sometimes we don't write anything for a long time, but after that several songs can appear just one by one. And everyone in the band has his own ideas for the new song. Sometimes we also have long breaks, even for several months, when we don't have rehearsals. After these breaks we get together with fresh breath and new ideas.
Kolja: First of all I compose a couple of riffs, some "verse" riff and "chorus/refrain" riff, then I try to do some arrangements, but I'm not so good with it. Then my band mates compose their own parts, we do the final arrangement and put the lyrics to the song. The process of composing doesn't take lots of time, sometimes it is quite spontaneous. Nowadays I'm trying to compose more rock'n'roll-ish riffs, but I always end up playing "not-so-melodic" stuff!

MRR: Has there never been a danger of Antimelodix just fading away because of long breaks? Are the members involved with any other bands/projects?

Sanya: No, I think it is very useful to take breaks. Also all of our musicians (except for me) are active in other bands and practice here and there. And as you understand, these bands also take our time.
Kolja: Yes, all of our members except Sanya have other projects and bands. Chester and Dima are the members of Minuala, Mr. Magister has tons of black metal projects—Soli Diaboli Gloria, Meti Bhuvah… Also me and Mr. Magister are playing in thrash metalpunk band named Örk Bastards. I'm playing in a folk metal band SatanaKozel and in a metal band My Blood with members from Russia and Finland. So as you can see we are quite active with different bands.
Sanya: Yes, currently I'm not active in the other bands, because I just don't have time for that. My main goal is to organize DIY gigs and mini tours for the bands. Most of those bands are Finnish. It takes a lot of time and gets on my nerves, but I like it…

MRR: According to Hellfuck 2011 sleeve, the artwork was done by some person called Vick. Who's Vick?

Sanya: Vick, full name is Viktor, is a local artist and our friend. He has made artwork for a few local bands. He is a big fan of dark hardcore and crust, and he is a student of local academy. Vick uses different kinds of graphics and unexpected materials, he loves using natural bones of dead animals and horns etc. Don't worry, he is not a killer or tormentor. His first personal exhibition took place in October in one of the central galleries of our town.

MRR: So he created that skeleton-moose-character? Do you think that creature on the sleeve would work as a mascot?

Kolja: Nope, it wasn't Vick's idea, actually I don't remember who gave an idea to use a moose for a 7" cover, maybe Sanya. I think it looks great and I hope it will appear in our future covers. We also used apocalyptic thermonuclear moose character with Örk Bastards.

MRR: Ville Anger of Delta Force 2 wrote a tour report about their visit to Russia (and he also praised Örk Bastards, by the way) to Toinen Vaihtoehto. How easy/hard it is to book gigs on that side of the border?

Sanya: Thanks to Ville for the report! Now it is easy to book gigs, earlier it was difficult, but now it is not such a problem anymore. The main problem with organizing Russian tours is long distances between towns, sometimes they are very long… and also there are traffic jams in big cities. But if you have a good van and an experienced driver your tour could be a good adventure.
Also here are no active punk scenes in small towns with population near 50.000 – 80.000 people. In Finland you can play shows in Joensuu, Lappeenranta, Kouvola, Kuopio… and there you can find promoters, punk activists, enthusiasts. In Russia active people concentrate in big cities and it is a big problem. I know this situation depends on the situation with work, economic shit, migration, local mentality, but it is too bad for punk tours. Also people in Russian small towns are unfriendly to punks.

MRR: Would you like to tell more about those unfriendly people? Which is the greatest danger the members of Antimelodix have faced because of prejudices?

Sanya: Nothing interesting to tell about unfriendly people, but I can say one thing: you can find these people in small towns everywhere. They are in Europe, too. One of my favorite bands—the Assassinators—wrote a song about it, Levande Dode (Living Dead). This song is from the album Sigt Efter Hjertet, and from the booklet you can find short story how the song was written. Check it, it is the same story.
Greatest danger…sounds like catastrophic news… But two years ago we visited St. Petersburg together with our friends Minuala and the Minc, both of them also from Petroskoi. So, in St. Petersburg right-winged football fans called the police and said that they want to beat the shit out of us, or even kill us… Police came with special forces and dogs, and they wanted to cancel the gig, but organizers and club owners saved the concert. Police was in the club and around it, they checked people and cars. It resembled a military operation or something like that… Maybe it was joke, but who can tell?

MRR: I actually bought that Assassinators album at Puntala, hah. And "Levande Dode" is my favorite song from that album, double-hah! But that Pietari-incident sounds quite absurd, if you ask me. How's the punk scene in Petroskoi? What can you tell about it?

Sanya: Nowadays we have a lot of young punk-bands in Petroskoi; most of them play street punk, ska punk and Oi!. Also they have tours around western and central part of Russia. Yes, there are few hardcore bands, most of them playing modern hardcore with lyrics about fashioned lifestyle...

MRR: Let's travel west then. How do you see Finland from a punk band's viewpoint? You even described Puntala's show as "dreams coming true". Was it really that awesome?

Sanya: So, I'm big fan of North-European punk/hardcore bands, I like Finnish scene a lot. I love different punk bands from Finland, for example such legendary bands as Kaaos, Riistetyt, Terveet Kädet, Kohu-63, Rattus….these bands and their songs influenced punk movement around the world and Russia too. And I also like Abduktio, Wasted, Death With a Dagger, Delta Force 2, Hasta la Vista Social Club… One of the best bands from Finland

is Våld, I hope that they will start playing again someday. I think that their album Boycott Your Life is one of the best albums of the past ten years. Few years ago I visited their show in Vuoritalo, it was as a nuclear blast!
I don't know what is going on inside Finnish punk scene, but your scene is looking like a friendly community. I think Puntala-rock is one of the most important events in this region and when our gig at Puntala-rock was confirmed it was blast for me. Yes, it was one of my dreams to play there; it was our first performance for big audience in a festival with such long history. I want to say "kiitos" to Mikko, Tarja, Jukkeli and others for the awesome festival and their work. It means a lot for me and other members of Antimelodix.

MRR: Puntala is quite important event, at least I tend to think that way. You see lot of great bands, some new and interesting ones (inclyding Antimelodix) and you perhaps run into some friends, too! But Sweden has Punk Illegal, Denmark has Copenhagen DIY Punk Fest, Germany has Punk & Disorderly Festival etc. Do you have any desire to play at those festivals and countries? Or anywhere else, for that matter?
Sanya: Yes, Puntala-rock was a great experience for us. Of course it will be interesting to take part in other festivals, especially Punk Illegal, Copenhagen DIY Punk Fest, DIY Hardcore Punk Fest (Gdynia, Poland) etc... So, during last two-three years we have sent messages, packages and mails to these festivals, but we haven't received any answers. I can only imagine how many bands want to play there and organizers have a long list of bands and full boxes of mails, but I hope someday they will find us. We are ready for gigs and having a good time! By the way... One of my dreams is to make a good festival in Petroskoi, maybe not so big as Puntala, but with a good atmosphere and independent spirit. My friends are ready to help me, so I hope someday this dream comes true...

MRR: Any future plans? What year will be most likely attached to the old Hellfuck-title?
Kolja: I hope we will release something within next year, so check our site for the news, tour plans and so on...
Sanya: We want to record a few fresh songs and it will be interesting to release a split LP/CD with some band... We'll try to find a label and a band for this split. So, Hellfuck 2012 is coming soon. Of course we will be looking for gigs and festivals, here and there. I hope we will see you again. As for me, I will continue organizing gigs and mini-tours for the bands I like!

MRR: And for that matter, this interview is almost finished. Is there anything else you want to say?
Kolja: Thanx for the interview, wish you all the best, dudes!
Sanya: This is all for now... Kiitos ja Kippis

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AGRIMONIA

Gruesome crust-metallers Agrimonia formed in 2005 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Originally inspired by the heaviness of Bolt Thrower, but taking their time to form an entity of their own, their first self-titled album didn't hit the scene until three years later. During 2010 the second album "Host of the Winged" was recorded and released which earned the band both widespread acclaim, as well as a west coast US tour. After recovering from a longer illness, the band is about to record their third, yet untitled, album this November. The new release is unleashed in spring 2013 on Southern Lord records. Their sound can be describes as a mix of doom metal and Swedish crust, whose dark intensity leaves you both angst-ridden and animated. Pontus (guitars) and Christina (vocals) takes us through the history of the band and to what compels the gloomy depths of their music.
Interview and photos by Mia Söderberg.

MRR: How did the band come about?
Pontus: Back in 2005, we had been talking for a while about starting a band. We had some musical ideas heading in a heavier, slower direction, which we really wanted to do something with. We all agreed on the formula and got going. It took little while for us to find "our" sound; we did two or so songs in the beginning that we threw away after a while. But in 2007 we had a solid line-up and started to record our first album.

Christina: A friend of ours actually suggested the name Agrimonia to us when we were searching for a band name. To me it sounded right. I liked that I didn't know the name and its meaning. It was a bit of a dark word. Agrimonia is a plant, used as a medicinal plant since the Middle Ages. It has been used also in witchcraft. It is a cure for a lot of things like wounds and sore throats. In folklore the tradition holds that when placed under a person's head, Agrimonia will induce a deep sleep that will last until removed.

MRR: What is the over-all ambition with the band?
Pontus: For me it's making music and records—plain and simple, but also one of the most important things in my life. Live shows are great, but it's not a goal in itself, just a very welcome bonus to what we're doing.
Christina: I agree with Pontus, but playing live has, for me, always been one of the highlights with the band, that is when you get to meet the listener. Seeing their reactions and talking afterwards are really important to me.

MRR: As a listener of Agrimonia it is impossible not to be stricken by the complexity and darkness of your sound and lyrics. What forces lie behind that angst-ridden atmosphere?
Pontus: I can appreciate that the music is dark, but at the same time I personally think it's quite uplifting, a mental catharsis. It's hard to speak about these things without using artsy clichés... I like music to be "larger than life," when a riff, a chord change or a melody just consumes you. This can be done with a three-chord song just as much as with more intricate arrangements. We don't strive to be dark or complex and I must stress that I feel our music is very honest and direct in its expression. Somehow this sound just comes very naturally for us.

I also think most of our musical inspiration is subconscious. Sure, you can easily draw parallels to this and that band, and I personally have mental notes of other bands on some riffs or ideas. For example, the interlude "Departure" from *Host of the Winged* always makes me think about Popol Vuh. But somehow I think you will always be informed and shaped by what you listened to a lot when you grew up. At the time when we started Agrimonia, I know I was listening a lot to Bolt Thrower's album *For Victory*. These simple arrangements were, and still are, some of the most crushing, emotionally overwhelming stuff I had heard. I could easily name ten more albums that have inspired me, but I don't like lists.

Christina: I write a lot of the lyrics and I like to write lyrics that have something to say but maybe the meaning will not reveal itself to the listener right away. It has to be a story that fits the music and will flow with it, almost like it's its own instrument. Over the years with Agrimonia my writing has changed a bit, I now like to hear the music and then the songs "tell" me what and how to write. I get my inspiration from lots of things like movies, books, art and music. I like to collect words, if I stumble upon a word that I really like I always write it down and save it for a song. Sometimes just one word can be my inspiration for a whole song.

MRR: Most of the songs are quite

long (eight to thirteen minutes), is this intentional?
Pontus: It is a part of the whole experience. It seems the songs need that time to fully express themselves. I never feel that they're long when I listen to them myself, or playing them live.

MRR: Given that the music in itself is so diverse, do the five of you share musical preferences or are you a mixed lot?
Pontus: We're a mixed lot indeed. But somehow we rarely disagree on Agrimonia's music. In the tour van, it's quite the opposite! It's hard to say what's an influence or an inspiration, or just stuff you like. I mean, I love early AC/DC but I would never try to incorporate their style into what I'm doing myself. I just couldn't do it. I guess I am the one who listens to the most pop oriented stuff in the band. I love stuff like Dinosaur Jr, PJ Harvey, Manic Street Preachers, Soundtrack of Our Lives etc, etc. But I go through phases all the time, one week it's only death metal next week just Thin Lizzy or whatever. Music never bores me—I'm constantly immersing myself.

MRR: Agrimonia has, much through the tireless efforts of the DIY community, been able to tour extensively. Previous tours have covered large parts of Europe, as well as the west coast tour in the States. What are the largest differences?
Pontus: The States are longer drives and fewer beers. But a good show is always a good show. We did some pretty intense house shows in the states. The outbreak of energy in those tiny rooms could be quite an experience. With Agrimonia we've only done one west coast tour so far, but we really want to do a full US tour in the future!
Christina: Europe has always had a really good reputation when it comes to touring. You always get food and beer when you arrive to the venue, somewhere to sleep and breakfast before leaving the next morning. I think these are all important things when you are on tour. In the States this did not seem as common. But when you tour the US, especially the bigger cities there are so many good vegan restaurants to make up for that instead.
Pontus: Playing Gilman was fun since I've heard much about it before going to the States. Also this show we did in Tijuana, Mexico when the power went out in the middle of the set. Of course, we wanted to believe it was because we played so hard. Also, Truckstop Alaska in Gothenburg needs to be mentioned, the best venue in Sweden. We had an awesome release party for our last album release show there.
Christina: I always like to mention Ungdomshuset in Copenhagen and 1000Fryd in Aalborg, Denmark for the organization, awesome food and sleeping places.

MRR: Having released two great albums, the up-coming and anticipated new album is slowly but surely on its way?
Pontus: Our vocalist Christina has been ill for quite some time and I have also been doing a lot of work with my other band Miasmal, so things have been running a little bit after schedule. But the new album is almost written and we plan to rehearse it during the summer and hit the studio sometime late summer or early fall. The formula is the same. With *Host of the Winged*, it was more of everything compared to the first album, maybe a little too much. So we're trying to hold back a little and to let simple ideas stay simple. In the end, the differences will be minor since I don't think we are able to change our sound too much.

MRR: You received much praise for your previous two albums; does this create a lot of pressure about making the next?
Pontus: Not more than usual. You always want to make a good album and first and foremost be happy with it yourself. We recently signed to Southern Lord records, which means we will be in a slightly better position financially to do this album. The first two we recorded and financed ourselves. Which can be really rewarding, but during the making of *Host of the Winged* it became too much work for me. During the end of the process I was quite exhausted, broke and fed up. I intend the recording of our new album to be more about the fun and less about the process!

MRR: Any last words to add?
Pontus: Many thanks for the interview and support! Check out www.agrimonia.info for updates regarding the work on our new album. Cheers!

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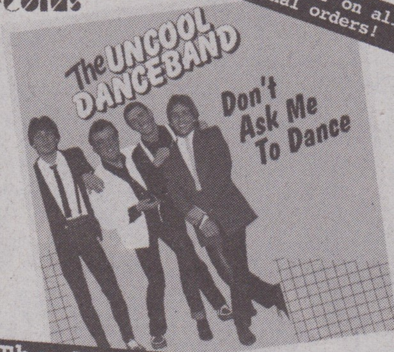

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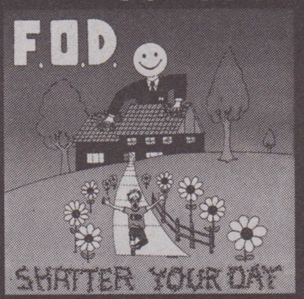

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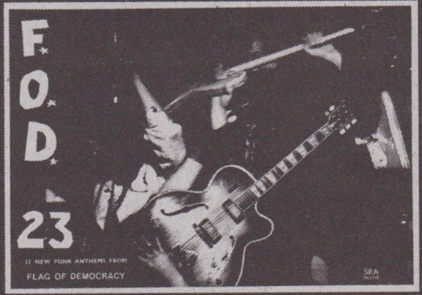

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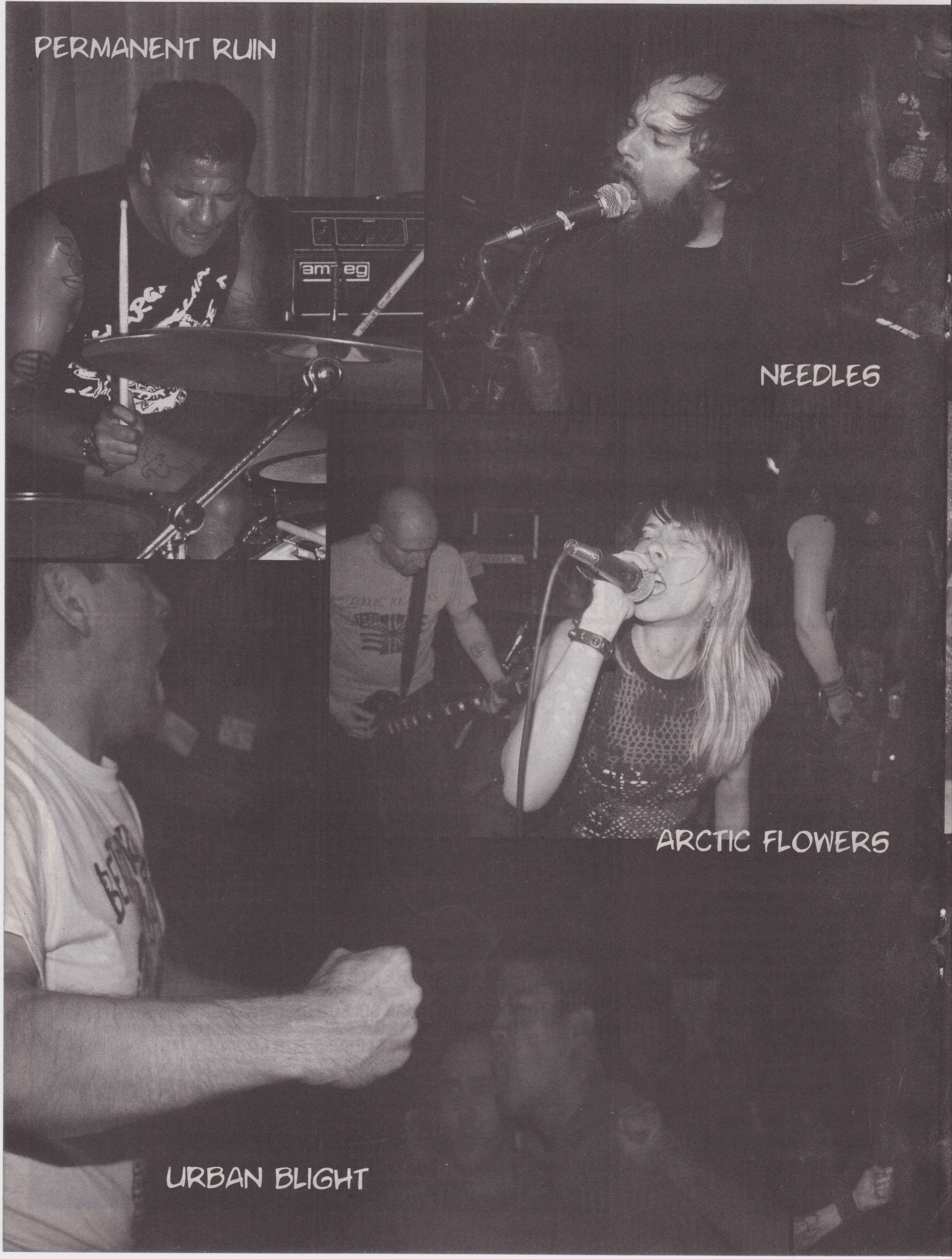
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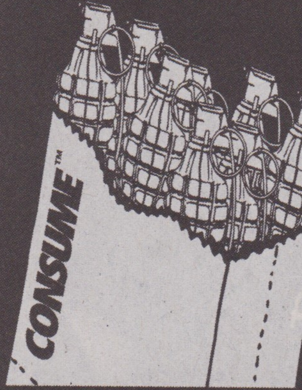

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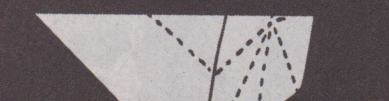

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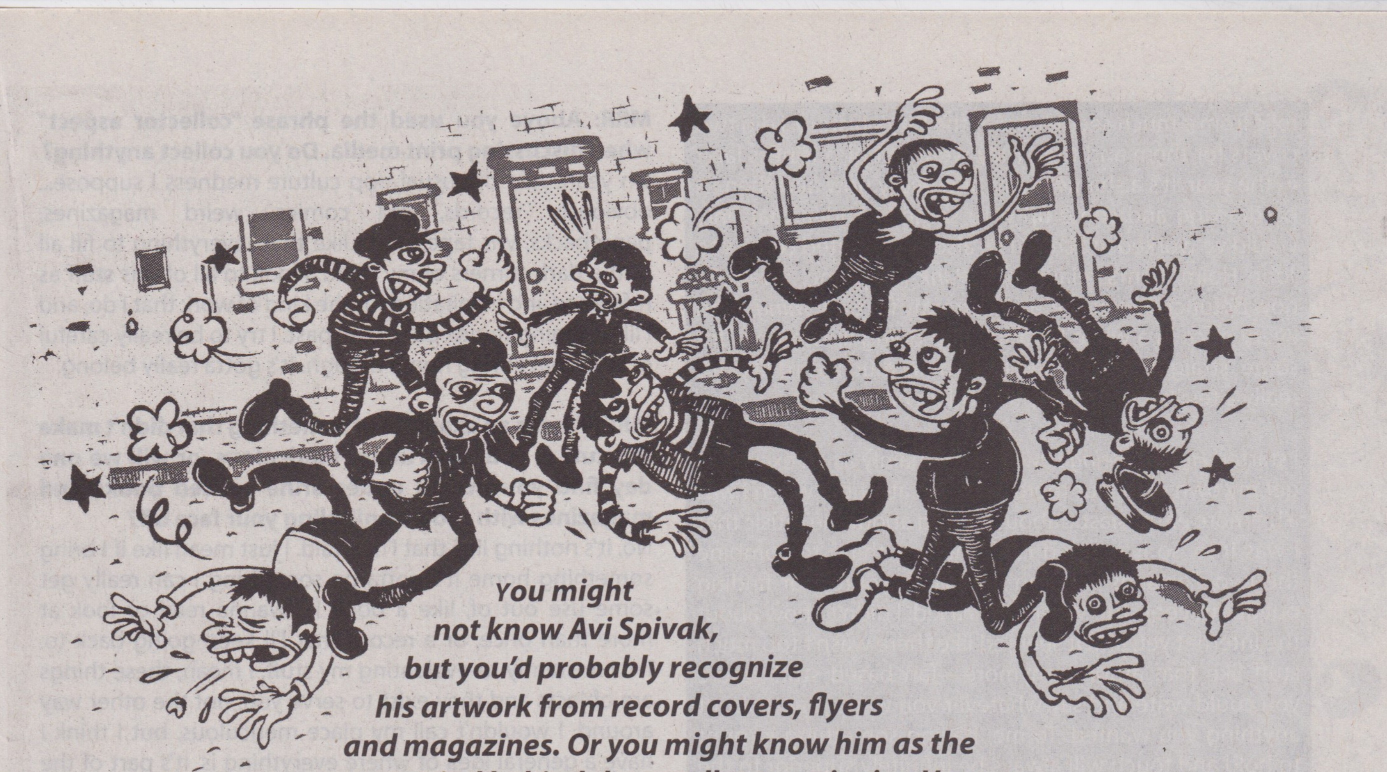


You might not know Avi Spivak, but you'd probably recognize his artwork from record covers, flyers and magazines. Or you might know him as the mastermind behind the excellent comic zine Human Being Lawnmower or the illustrator of an amazing collection of stories from Norton records known as Kicksville Confidential. Or perhaps he was just the nerd that sat next to you in elementary school who was always getting yelled at for his incessant doodling. If you like rock and roll and/or comics, then I humbly suggest you familiarize yourself with his work. And if you don't like rock and roll, you should go die.

AVI SPIVAK

Interview by Sarah Crews

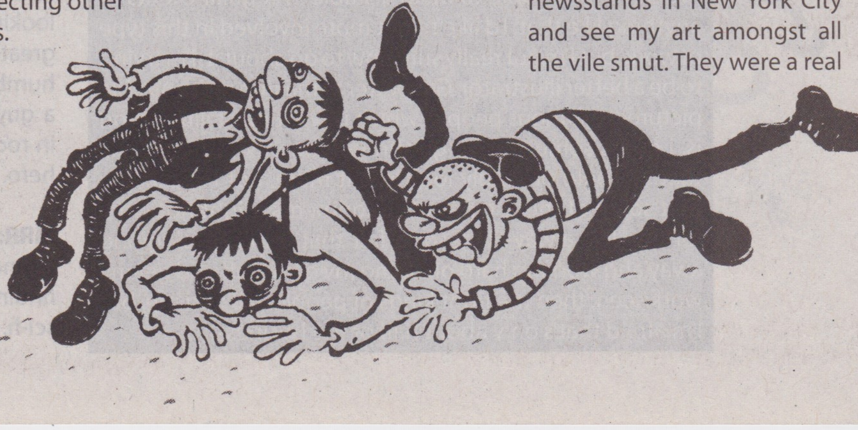
MRR: The first *Human Being Lawnmower* (a publication self-described as "Culture, comics, rock'n'roll") came out in 2007, and now there are three issues. There was a lot of time between issues two and three coming out. Is it just something you put together when you have time or get enough material?

Yeah, for the most part it's stuff I work on between paying gigs and other projects, in my free time really. I'd like to do it more but it takes a while to get enough content together. I'm constantly thinking about this stuff and always have my ear out for features and people I want to get involved. So far it's been about two years between issues. Most of that time is made up of gathering material. When I decide it looks like enough for an issue I'll spend a solid few months working on it non-stop and neglecting other things in my life. It becomes kind of manic at times.

The third issue was supposed to be done about a year earlier, but as soon as I started to get serious about putting it together I landed the job working on *Kicksville Confidential* for Norton and that basically took up all of my time 'round the clock for the rest of the year. So anyway, through the course of that, a lot of new material for *Human Being Lawnmower* came about and it was almost like starting from scratch after that. Then it kind of took on a life of its own.

MRR: Before *Human Being Lawnmower*, your comics were published in other magazines. What made you decide to do your own zine? Why did you choose a print outlet over a digital one?

Screw was my first ever "professional" gig. I met the editors one night at CBGB's and showed them my sketchbook and they invited me to the office. I figured I might be able to convince them to run some dirty gag strips, so in the next week or so I banged out about eight or ten samples to bring over. Turns out they weren't very good and that this kind of humor wasn't really a good fit for me. So when I showed them they suggested I take a crack at doing a cover instead, which was great since it paid much better and it was a real thrill to be able to go to the sleaziest newsstands in New York City and see my art amongst all the vile smut. They were a real



relic from a much seedier era in the City's history. I did two covers for them and then they went out of business later in the year. It's a shame really, and every now and then I'll be drawing and come up with some sick idea that only would've worked in *Screw*. I've also contributed comics to John Holmstrom's relaunched *Punk* magazine, Sweden's now defunct *Denimzine*, and currently for *Ugly Things*, and every once in a while I'll land a job doing illustrations for some "straight" magazines, but not as much as I'd like. It's really a terrible time to try to work in publishing.

I started *Human Being Lawnmower* mainly as an excuse to get my own work out there, and also at a time when I was a bit more enthusiastic about writing about the music that I was into, so it seemed like a natural thing to combine the two. Fanzines were an important source for finding out about cool stuff when I was a kid. I didn't know about the internet yet, and it seemed like there wasn't too much stuff like that around anymore—fan based stuff where you could write and say whatever you wanted and about anything you wanted. To me, having something in print to hold and touch will always be infinitely superior to the latest in digital technology. The internet is an incredible resource and it's certainly made everything much more connected, but it's really two different things. Maybe it has something to do with the collector aspect of it, but also as an artist there is nothing better than seeing your work reproduced the way it's supposed to be.

MRR: Do you ever use computers for any of your drawing?
All of my drawings are done by hand and really using only basic materials. Sometimes I'll do color work with the computer, but I'm trying to get away from that more. I saw a show last year of Jack Davis's amazing watercolor illustrations and seeing his originals in person made me never want to color anything on a computer ever again. Also, looking at Drew Friedman's stuff has the same effect. It's gotta be good.

MRR: As far as "straight" magazines go, to get stuff published in those, do you have to go around to offices and show portfolios and really "put yourself out there?" I know some photographers that have to do that sort of thing. Is it the same for illustrators? You seem like a pretty modest dude that I don't imagine being into schmoozing.
Yeah, I guess that's what you're supposed to do, but I'm not very good at it. Most of the time when I get these kinds of gigs it's purely accidental and completely out of the blue. I've never been able to build a stable of regular clients or anything like that. I'd like to get more involved in this type of work, but I'm not really sure how to go about it. I'm trying to be a better illustrator. Get better at making recognizable pictures of famous people, which is what most illustration is. I guess some people go through agents or things like that. I should probably look into it more, but I also know that some of these types of assignments might not work for me. I've always just sorta felt that if I keep plugging away and working hard on doing my own stuff and get my work seen, then the right kinds of people will find me, but I'm afraid that's only about half of the business.

MRR: Above you used the phrase "collector aspect" when discussing print media. Do you collect anything?
Oh yeah. Just the usual pop culture madness I suppose... obviously records, old comics, weird magazines, paperbacks, vhs tapes, stuff like that...everything to fill all of the dark corners of my mind. I look to all of this stuff as reference and inspiration for the kind of work that I do, and I like digging things out of the past. I try to be really careful of stuff that I bring home though. It's gotta really belong.

MRR: What's an example of something that didn't make the cut? Is your apartment meticulous, or will we one day find you buried under urine soaked books and magazines with rodents nibbling your face off?
No, it's nothing like that I'm afraid. I just mean like if I bring something home it's gotta be something I can really get some use out of, like a book I'll wanna read or look at more than once, or a record that I'll keep going back to. I'm constantly re-evaluating my stuff. I mean, these things are objects and they exist to serve you, not the other way around. I wouldn't call my place meticulous, but I think I have a general idea of where everything is. It's part of the whole New York City apartment deal where you need to make a small amount of space go a long way. Kinda like comics...

MRR: In *Human Being Lawnmower* you have gotten to talk with the likes of Gary Panter, Jesse Hector, Flamin' Groovies, Laurice—who was your favorite person to interview or what has been your favorite feature so far?
A lot of the time seeking interviews is really just a ruse to talk to people I'm interested in and who I feel deserve to tell their story. Probably the most exciting one was meeting and talking with Jesse Hector because it was completely unexpected. I'd been a huge fan of his for years and just think that he had the most amazing career, really spanning the entire history of British rock'n'roll. Anyway, I was in London looking around at this record store on Portobello Road and I find a single of his from the '90s. I asked the guy at the shop if he was still around and the guy was like, "Yeah, mate, I put that record out and sure you can find him most days hanging around so-and-so pub in Camden..." So, before too long I headed over there and showed the record to the lady bartender and asked if she knew the guy on the sleeve. She was amazed. She said, "Sure I know him. He's the bloke who comes in here and orders half pints of cider," but she had no idea this old guy had any kind of rock'n'roll career. Turns out he wasn't around, but I ordered a drink anyway and before too long I get a tap on the shoulder and it's Jesse Hector saying, "Excuse me, I heard you were looking for me." He was really the coolest guy, and had the greatest stories. We talked for hours and he was totally humble about everything; there was no bitterness at all for a guy who was there through basically every innovation in rock'n'roll and is still relatively unknown. A true unsung hero.

MRR: Do you read other zines?
I'm not as up on current stuff as I could be. I really enjoy finding old magazines, stuff on rock'n'roll, comics, movies, sci-fi, etc. Sometimes it doesn't really matter what the

subject is, just the fact that some lunatic had devoted their time and energy to their obsessions is what it's all about. True fandom. As for current stuff, *Savage Damage Digest* is pretty great and *Galactic Zoo Dossier* is a wonder to behold.

MRR: Aside from comics in various publications and band flyers, you also do commissions?
Occasionally I'll get pretty random illustration commissions. For example, I've done more than one wedding invitation, but usually it's for people in bands wanting art for record sleeves or t-shirts and stuff. I used to do anything, but recently I've started to turn some things down if I don't think it'll be a good fit, or if it's something I don't want to be associated with. I wish I had time to do more paintings because I think that's what people are more interested in, you know like something for decoration.

MRR: What is your favorite story from *Kicksville Confidential*?
It would be hard to pick a favorite story. Off the top of my head I would say that Hasil Adkins eating the old Andy Warhol soup can is pretty legendary. Esquerita and Screamin' Jay Hawkins getting into a fistfight is pretty great, too. Or The Mighty Hannibal riding through midtown Manhattan on a stolen circus elephant. Like I said, it's hard to choose.

Who is your favorite turbaned Norton records musician?
I would go with Rudy Ray Moore. I mean, you can't really fuck with Dolemite! Although the Sun Ra doo wop collections are pretty out of this world.

MRR: You have recently worked with Billy and Miriam from Norton records on the awesome *Kicksville Confidential*. There are so many amazing stories there and the illustrations are perfect…I read it over and over. It's just mind-blowing stuff. How did you guys decide what to include? I imagine there are tons more crazy stories?
Kicksville Confidential came about because it was the 25th anniversary of Norton records and they wanted to do something special to commemorate the occasion, and to share some of the stories about the artists that have made the label so great for all these years. It was hard to decide what to include on some of the people in there, and also it was important to try to get everyone represented. It was really a dream job and I feel like my art improved tremendously over the course of working on it. I generally have a pretty slow process and this book forced me to turn into a comic book machine for about four months. I was feverishly cranking out pages to meet the deadlines. There're some amazing stories in there and some of my all time favorite rock'n'roll heroes, too.

MRR: Do you have a favorite that was not included that you would like to illustrate should there be a *Kicksville Confidential* #2? Will there be a #2?
I'm not really sure about a *Kicksville Confidential* #2, although I hope that if people are responsive enough to #1 then it could be a possibility. There're certainly enough stories to fill several comic books. I mean, we had to fit so much stuff into #1 where acts like the Sonics, the Flamin' Groovies, and the Dictators were all covered in one panel. Surely there's a ton more you could say about lots of the groups and musicians covered.

MRR: Do you like doing this sort of historical comic work, or would you rather do autobiographical work or completely make stuff up, if that's even possible? Is Rags Riley a real person?
Yeah, I like doing the historical stuff, and I think that comics are a good format for that type of storytelling. I've always enjoyed true crime type stuff and I read a lot of nonfiction. I've been thinking a lot more lately about autobiographical stuff, and have a couple of stories worked out that will probably end up in the next *Human Being Lawnmower*. With writing, this is the kind of stuff

that comes the most naturally to me, and I happen to know a lot of people where it's not too much of a stretch turning them into cartoon characters. And then I guess I've done my share of comics that are completely made up nonsense and exist in a weird fantasy universe. That's kind of where Rags Riley comes from. It started when I was asked to do a monthly comic for Sweden's *Denimzine*. The whole mag is in Swedish, but they wanted the comic in English, so I intentionally tried to dumb down the stories, and I'm not really sure how well it worked. It seems the character became very one-dimensional and didn't have any supporting cast with conflicting morals to push the stories along. I was pretty much winging it from strip to strip and there is no cohesive narrative. It was good practice, but I found that kind of process doesn't really work for me.

MRR: You mentioned to me in a previous conversation that you like comics where the artist really "bares it all." Do you have plans to do such a thing?
Of course, but not just in comics. I tend to feel that way about everything: music, movies, books, etc. I really admire comics artists that can do this because it must really blur the realities of their life and their work. The latest Chester Brown book about the sex workers is pretty amazing, and even if you don't agree with him you have to respect his level of honesty about it. He really opens up and takes you inside that world. R. Crumb is probably the king of this…all of his sick fantasies come out in his work. It helps that he's the greatest artist alive and a legendary voice in comics, but even if people are repulsed by his images and ideas, you can't argue with his honesty and the level of truthfulness he's able to reveal about himself; it's undeniable. I tend to be drawn to art where you can see that there is some sort of compulsion driving the work…that it's something that has to be done for whatever reason. When you can really see the madness behind every line. Art is like therapy.

MRR: Mark Twain, in trying to write his autobiography (I'm currently reading this, not just weirdly pulling it out of my ass) was convinced that it isn't possible to tell the whole truth about yourself remarking, "I have been dictating this autobiography of mine daily for three months; I have thought of fifteen hundred or two thousand incidents in my life which I am ashamed of, but I have not gotten one of them to consent to being on paper yet." He couldn't even do it when he had an agreement drawn up that his autobiography wouldn't be published until 100 years after his death. Do you think it is possible?
I have to agree with Twain on this one. I think that people will always be inclined to omit certain details about themselves. And if you're talking about your own life and experiences it's hard to see it any other way than how you want it to be.

MRR: Sometimes I think people add things in, as well as omit things. Some people like to portray themselves as nerdier or more introverted or weird than they actually are. I like seeing the different ways comics artists draw themselves and others.
Sure, people will always see things the way they want to. The mind is fucked up and probably has some kind of mechanism to make things seem more pleasant than they actually are/were. Comic artists are no exception.

MRR: So, you grew up in Peekskill, New York, not too far from New York City. Despite being a place many people may not have heard of, several famous-y people are from or have lived there, like George Pataki, Stanley Tucci, the Fleischmann Yeast Company, L. Frank Baum went to school there, Jackie Gleason lived there…and two comic artists–Herb Trimpe (of Incredible Hulk fame), and Peter Bagge, and now you. What makes Peekskill residents want to draw comics?
Wow, you've done your research. Yeah, Pataki was the mayor. Obviously Bagge was a big one for me. I was a huge fan of *Hate* before I ever knew he was from Peekskill. It was the only comic book I've ever been into that I remember anxiously awaiting new ones. I've always been more of a back-issues kinda guy. Gleason is another great. He built this round house shaped like a flying saucer out in the woods with a giant telescope coming out of the roof in the center. He was completely obsessed with UFOs and paranormal activity, like he owned thousands of books on all this stuff. The story goes that his old golfing buddy, Richard Nixon, took him to see the corpses of dead aliens that were being stored at a base in Florida somewhere and Gleason was never the same after that. I'm always skeptical about these types of things, but if I'm gonna believe anyone it's gonna be Jackie Gleason. The bus depot in Brooklyn is named after him too, which is cool. Didn't know about Trimpe, but I can't say I'm familiar with his work either. I'm not sure about the comics connection, though it's probably some kinda escapism that goes with living in a small town.

MRR: Have you ever lived out of New York or thought about it?
I spent about a year in Seattle when I was around eighteen. Right after high school me and a pal took off in his parents' Chevette and drove across the country. I guess the idea was to get as far away from home as possible and see the world a bit. We spent a few weeks going through all these towns and cities and ended up in Seattle where we had a friend to stay with. It was also around this time that the car we had been living in was completely driven into the ground and we had run out of money. I spent a while doing labor-ready type work and ended up doing the oddest of jobs—tiled a Jack In The Box restaurant, assembly line at Microsoft...I eventually landed a glamorous gig washing dishes at a restaurant in the Pike Place Market which meant steady pay and free food. Before too long I had an apartment downtown and was really digging it out there. It was like right out of the pages of *Hate*! But after about a year or so I felt like it had run its course and decided to head back to New York.

MRR: Did you always draw since you were a little kid? Were you influenced by anyone in your family? Are any of them artists?
Yeah, I guess I was pretty into drawing as far back as I can remember. I was never the most natural or gifted artist, but I just sorta made it my thing. My older brother was a big influence for me. He was always the better artist and was responsible for there always being comics around the house and eventually punk rock, too. Looking back, I was pretty lucky to be exposed to a lot of that stuff early on, like having all these underground comics and punk records lying around and stuff like that. My mom was pretty creative, too, and was into the whole arts and crafts movement.

MRR: Did you get in trouble at school for drawing and not paying attention?
Oh yeah, all the time. I'd say that's basically how I learned to draw. I've never been diagnosed or anything, but it's probably some form of ADD or whatever. I'd literally compulsively fill up entire notebooks with drawings when I was supposed to be taking notes or paying attention to something. I still have some and they're kinda neat to look through, like this one from American History class where I would draw all the events that were covered in class, lots of cowboys and Indians and Civil War battles.

MRR: I have a friend that did the same thing. The teachers would always glare at her and then I think they figured out what she was doing and usually didn't say much. People learn in different ways and I'd rather look at her drawings than my notes. At what point did you decide to publish your drawings or pursue a career drawing comics?
I'm not sure. I guess I can't really imagine doing anything else. I've had all manner of straight jobs over the years and have always just wanted to work on my own projects. I've constructed this fantasyland where I live and a lot of it is about just living the kind of life that you want and ignoring everything else, so I figure out how to get by and still have enough time to do what I want. Right now things are pretty good. The publishing part of it was just as a way to get stuff out there. I mean there's basically no money to be made from this type of stuff, so why not just do

your own thing the way you want it to be done? It's very direct and immediate. It's a weird time right now for publishing. Everyone says it's over and everything's gotta be digital and this and that, but don't you think there has to be some sort of backlash from that? I think there will be and it's gonna be through a lot more self-publishing and small press outfits, kinda like what happened with records.

MRR: Do your early works make you cringe now? What is the worst comic/drawing you've ever done?
Absolutely. I have a hard time looking at almost all of my old work. I think that as an artist you can only see mistakes you made and what you could have done differently. It's a good place to be when you feel that all your newest work is the best thing you've ever done. Sometimes I find little zines and mini-comics that I used to make and they're absolutely horrible. The worst part about it is that when I see these things I fear that some of them may actually be floating around somewhere because I used to xerox these things and actually give them out to people. The worst thing I've ever drawn? That's a tough one... have you ever seen any of the 45 sleeves from my old band Skin Disorder? Yikes!

MRR: I have seen one. I think the drawings look more like your drawings than the photo of you actually looks like you! Once I think I said something to you along the lines of,

You should draw this..." and then I immediately thought about how annoying that must be. Do people often tell you what you should be drawing?
Yeah, sometimes. Or like, "You should totally do a comic about this..." I guess you never know when a good idea will happen and real life is as good a place as any for inspiration. It's a good way to think that whatever happens around you is valid, and that everything is a story.

MRR: Who are your influences or favorites? What, besides other comics, influence your comics?
It's a hard question to answer. There's always some type of vague ideas or obsessions. I look at a lot of different kinds of stuff and it's usually guided by impulses or instincts. All of my favorite things have a place in that strange fantasyland where I live…books, movies, records, dreams, etc. For comics I guess I like a lot of the obvious stuff—Crumb, Clowes, the Hernandez Bros, the underground stuff, old *MAD* and *MAD* rip-offs, too many to mention. Some of these guys are like machines, their work just looks so natural and effortless it amazes me. There're other types of artists that I really like too, people like Kim Deitch and Spain where you can actually feel the struggle in their drawings and it can cause a very different and equally appealing experience. The form has such a rich history, and much like rock'n'roll, you'll always be able to dig deeper and deeper.

MRR: Do you dream in comics? Like do you ever dream you are a cartoon?
Man, I can't say that I ever have, though I have done weird comics based on my dreams before and it's something I always think about. I heard there's some stuff you can smoke that will turn everything into a cartoon land but I've never tried it. It's supposed to be legal, too.

MRR: Many of your comics feature music, and clearly you have an interest in music. You mentioned you were in the band Skin Disorder, an Oi! Band. When was that? Have you been in other bands?
Skin Disorder was an Oi! band I joined as a teenager. We put out a couple of singles and played some cool shows. After that I was in a group called Prowler that was this three-piece punk/R&B outfit and that lasted a couple of years. There are some recordings that were done by Carl from the Templars that just came out last year in Germany (I guess they're a little behind over there), and I have a live set from CBGB's that I feel better captured the sound of the band and maybe I can get them to put that out, too.

MRR: Do you listen to many newer bands?
Unfortunately I'm not as up on this stuff as a I once was and a lot of the time the only way I ever know about or hear new bands is when people I know are involved. But there is stuff that I like and once in a while I'll hear something good enough to get excited about.

MRR: How did you get into punk?
I think from very early on I had a penchant for mischief and juvenile delinquency. It wasn't like discovering punk opened up a whole new world for me, it just kinda made sense. And like I said before, I had an older brother who would always have punk records and tapes around the house, and even my dad was moderately into it and took me to see the Ramones when I was in the eighth grade. By the time I was fourteen or so I'd already seen the Ramones, the Dictators, Iggy, etc. I'd say that my path was defined pretty early on. I've always just embraced it.

MRR: Do you have any pets?
Yeah, I live with two black cats. A few years back I lived in an apartment in Queens with an ex-girlfriend and one of our neighbors had taken in a pregnant stray cat and when the kittens came they needed homes. Of course we were unable to turn them away and ended up taking in two of them, including the runt. When I moved out of that place I took them with me. I work at home a lot and they've turned out to be pretty good company.

MRR: Since the last *Human Being Lawnmower* depicted the end of the world on the back and this might be the last issue ever of *MRR,* I suppose I should ask you about the end of the world. Do you really think the world is going to end? Did you know that the people who have made the interpretations of the Mayan calendar signifying an end to the world are just bad at math and ignorant of how Mayan calendars work in general? Do you wish the world would end? It doesn't matter what you answer since no one will read it because we'll all be dead.
The back of *Human Being Lawnmower* #3 was just a sensational ruse to try to sell more copies. Obviously, I don't think the world is *really* gonna end, certainly not because of a calendar that is probably just the end of some kind of cycle anyway. When I was younger I was a pretty paranoid person and felt that it was a definite possibility. That's probably why I never planned for the future or anything like that. It's gotta be some kind of ego trip to feel like you'll be part of the last people to exist on the planet. Like what could possibly come after this? The way things are going maybe there is an expiration date. I'm just not sure it will be in our lifetime. But who knows? Anything can happen.

Bibliography:
All three issues of *Human Being Lawnmower* and *Kicksville Confidential* #1 are available through my site at avispivak.com and *Human Being Lawnmower* #4 is optimistically scheduled for 2013.

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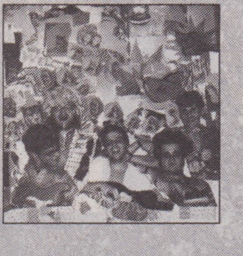

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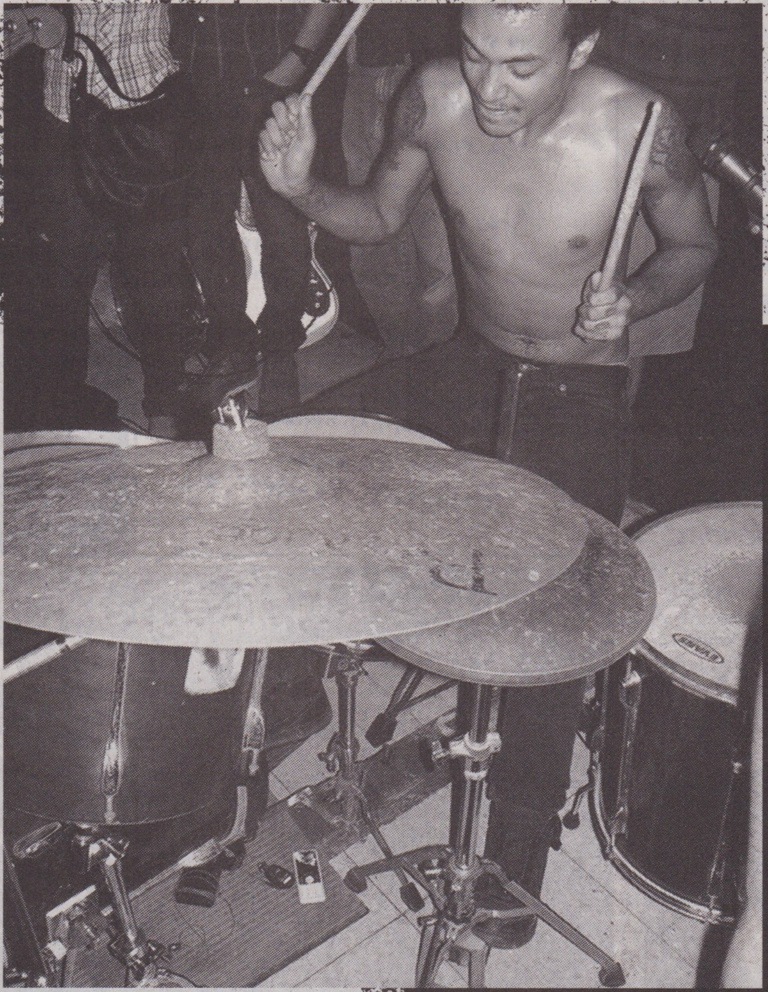

I found out about Napolnariz through a recent cassette reissue of their first record, Todos Terminamos Igual, *which was originally released as a CD-R ten years ago. A Puerto Rican punk band with a cassette reissue of a full-length album originally released on CD-R? I was interested in it before I even heard it. As noted in the letter that I got with the tape, "Few bands [in Puerto Rico] had the money to put things out any other way, let alone have the hope that someone would put it out for them in a place without a strong tradition of rock music, let alone punk." In other words, DIY was a tradition forced upon Napolnariz by something other than themselves. This seems like a perfect atmosphere for punk, not punk re-enactment. I'm glad I got that tape because I found out that* Todos Terminamos Igual *contains some of the best punk I've heard in a while. Listening to Napolnariz brought me back to when I first listened to the* Breaking the Rules #8 *compilation, maybe because the vocals reminded me of Xtraverts and the music reminded me of Kriminella Gitarrer, especially the song "Gatos Negros," which I thought was a cover of some '70s Puerto Rican punk gem that doesn't really exist. Unfortunately, Napolnariz doesn't often play anymore since their singer and guitarist moved to the United States looking for a better future, but I interviewed them anyway because they are my new favorite band. I got a hold of them through email and sent them these questions, which they then sent back to me in English and Spanish. Here's da shit…*

Interview by Matt. Image and photo by Hommy

Yo supe de Napolnariz a través de una reedición reciente en casete de su primer disco, "Todos terminamos igual," el cual originalmente salió como un CD-R hace diez años. Una banda de punk puertorriqueña con una reedición en casete de un disco que originalmente salió en CD-R? – estaba interesado en él antes de ni siquiera escucharlo. Como notaba la carta que recibí con el casete, "Pocas bandas [en Puerto Rico] tenían el dinero para sacar cosas de alguna otra manera, mucho menos tener la esperanza que alguien las sacara por ellos en un lugar sin una fuerte tradición de música rock, mucho menos punk." En otras palabras, la autogestión o el hacer las cosas por sí mismos (DIY) fue una tradición impuesta sobre Napolnariz por algo más que ellos mismos. Esto parece como una perfecta atmosfera para el punk, no una re-actuación del punk. Estoy contento de haber obtenido ese casete porque yo encuentro que "Todos terminamos igual" contiene del mejor punk que he escuchado en bastante tiempo. Escuchando a Napolnariz me regreso a cuando escuché por primera vez al compilado "Breaking the Rules #8," quizás porque los vocales me acordaron a Xtraverts y la música me acordó a Kriminella Gitarrer, especialmente la canción "Gatos negros," la cual yo creía era una versión de alguna joya de punk puertorriqueño de los '70s que en realidad no existe. Desafortunadamente, Napolnariz ya no toca muy a menudo desde que su cantante y guitarrista se mudó a los Estados Unidos buscando un mejor futuro pero yo los entrevisté comoquiera porque son mi nueva banda favorita. Los conseguí a través de correo electrónico y les mande estas preguntas, las cuales ellos me devolvieron en inglés y español. Aquí está la pendejá…

Entrevista por Matt, Imagen y foto por Hommy

MRR: Why don't you start by introducing yourself and what you do in the band?

Jonpol: I'm Jonpolnariz, guitarist and singer of Napolnariz.

Gaby: Gabynapol, drums.

MRR: How did Napolnariz get started?
Jonpol: Napolnariz got started in San Juan, our capitol city, sometime in early to mid 1998, the year I turned eighteen. My friend Stoney and I were the first to start working on what would become Napolnariz. We bonded over our mutual love of punk rock and disdain for society, including certain aspects of our scene, as well as our willingness to take hard drugs, which are readily and cheaply available all over, Puerto Rico being an entry port for drugs coming into the United States. Together we recorded on a boom box what would become the first Napolnariz songs. We were just hanging out. I remember his room was so small I had to stand on his bed so we both had space to play our guitars. His mom would knock on the door and bring us hot dogs, which we ate somehow after having been shooting up in there. Anyways, we never got our shit together so the project sat on the shelf for a few years until I was able to find some other people like me to play with.

MRR: So how did you and Gaby meet and actually start playing?
Jonpol: I was at some show I don't really remember and this young kid walked in with an Eskorbuto patch on the sleeve of his leather jacket. At the time, I probably thought something like, "What the fuck does this little kid know about Eskorbuto?" So I tried to rip the patch from his sleeve, and to my surprise, he fought back and didn't let me. I immediately liked his style! We ended up talking and it came out in our conversation that he was a drummer. I asked him if he wanted to be in my "band" and we exchanged phone numbers to set up a practice. Since that moment, Gaby and I are the only continuous members of Napolnariz.
Gaby: It was all because my mum answered the phone. She said to me, "There's a young man on the phone who's very interested in your artistic talent, you should spend a little time with him." My mom didn't know it was Jonpol. That's how it happened, papá. My mom and dad let me practice at home with Jonpol, unfortunately. At first, I wouldn't answer his phone calls. I would hang up on him, blam! I would ignore him, blam! Eventually, my mom was like, "Look, this guy won't stop calling; play with that motherfucker!" Shortly after that, we recorded our first record [*Todos Terminamos Igual*] in a room.

MRR: You two aren't the only ones that played on *Todos Terminamos Igual* though, right?
Jonpol: No, when I met Gaby, I had decided I didn't want to play guitar *and* sing as I had been doing. I only wanted to play guitar since I didn't think I was good enough to do both things at the same time. So, I got this kid with a mohawk who used to come into the video store where I used to work to do the singing. He went by the name of Figo Paisas. Then, he brought in Javi Garrote, a Basquiat-loving aspiring artist, to play the bass. This is the first line up of Napolnariz to play out. Figo quit a few months in though, so the band ended up being a three-piece with me singing and playing guitar, Gaby drumming and Javi playing bass. That's the lineup that recorded *Todos Terminamos Igual*. After that, we went through quite a few bass players, the most notable being Ivan Nieto, who played on our split with Anti-Sociales, and Roberto Muerto, who played on our second record and our EP. Currently we have Javi with us again.

MRR: How did you record *Todos Terminamos Igual*?
Jonpol: Well, we recorded it in a little room. Really, it was more like a shed attached to the side of this guy Coki's house. He and this other guy I knew, Josean (RIP), said they were setting up a "studio". I think they had recorded like one other thing before they did our record and they really didn't have much equipment. I think we gave them like a hundred bucks maybe. We did the record in two weekend sessions as we all had our regular lives to go about during the week.

MRR: ¿Por qué no empiezan por presentarse a sí mismos y lo que hacen en la banda?
Jonpol: Soy Jonpolnariz, guitarrista y cantante de Napolnariz.
Gaby: Gabynapol, batería.

MRR: ¿Cómo empezó Napolnariz?
Jonpol: Napolnariz empezó en San Juan, nuestra ciudad capital, en algún tiempo de principios a mediados del 1998, el año que cumplí dieciocho. Yo y mi amigo Stoney fuimos los primeros en empezar a trabajar en lo que se convertiría en Napolnariz. Creamos un vínculo en base a nuestro mutuo amor por el punk rock y desprecio por la sociedad--incluyendo ciertos aspectos de nuestra escena, además, por nuestra disposición a meternos drogas, las cuales son baratas y fácilmente disponibles por todas partes al ser Puerto Rico un puerto de entrada para drogas a los Estados Unidos. Juntos grabamos en un radio lo que se convertirían en las primeras canciones de Napolnariz. Mas na' que estábamos jangueando. Su mai nos tocaba la puerta y nos traía "hot dogs" los cuales nos comíamos de alguna manera después de haber estado metidos allí adentro. Pero pues, nunca cuadramos lo nuestro así que el proyecto quedo en na' por par de años hasta que pude conseguir otra gente como yo con quien tocar.

MRR: Así que ¿Cómo fue que en realidad tú y Gaby se conocieron y empezaron a tocar?
Jonpol: Estaba en un show que de verdad no me acuerdo y este chamaquito entro por ahí con un parcho de Eskorbuto en la manga de su jacket de cuero. En aquel tiempo, de seguro pensé algo como, "¿Que carajo sabe este chamaquito de Eskorbuto?" Así que le trate de arrancar el parcho de su manga y para mi gran sorpresa, peleó pa' tras y no me dejó. ¡Inmediatamente me gustó su estilo! Terminamos hablando y salió en nuestra conversación que él era baterista. Le pregunte si quería estar en mi "banda" e intercambiamos números de teléfono para seteár una práctica. Desde ese momento, Gaby y yo somos los únicos integrantes continuos de Napolnariz.
Gaby: Todo fue porque mi mai contesto el teléfono. Ella me dijo, "Hay un joven en el teléfono que está muy interesado en tu talento artístico, deberías pasar un tiempito con él." Mi mai no sabía que era Jonpol. Así fue, papá. Mi mai y mi pai me dejaron practicar en casa con Jonpol, desafortunadamente. Al principio, yo no le contestaba las llamadas. Yo le colgaba. ¡Blam! Yo lo ignoraba. ¡Blam! Eventualmente, mi mai estaba como que, "Mira, este tipo no dejar de llamar; ¡Toca con ese cabrón! Poco después, grabamos nuestro primer disco ["Todos terminamos igual] en un cuarto.

MRR: ¿Pero ustedes dos no fueron los únicos que tocaron en "Todos terminamos igual," verdad?
Jonpol: No, cuando yo conocí a Gaby, había decidido que no quería tocar guitarra y cantar como había estado haciendo. Solo quería tocar guitarra ya que yo no pensaba que era lo suficientemente bueno para hacer ambas cosas a la misma vez. Así que, conseguí a un chamaquito con un mohawk que entraba al video en donde yo trabajaba para que cantara. Se hacía llamar Figo Paisas. Entonces, el trajo a Javi Garrote, un aspirante artista amante de Basquiat, para que tocara el bajo. Esa fue la primera alineación de Napolnariz en tocar fuera. Figo renuncio después de unos meses así que la banda terminó siendo un trio conmigo cantando y tocando guitarra, Gaby en la batería y Javi tocando bajo. Esa fue la alineación que grabó "Todos terminamos igual." Después de eso, pasamos por bastantes bajistas, los más notables fueron Iván Nieto, que tocó en nuestro disco compartido con Anti-Sociales, y Roberto Muerto, quien tocó en nuestro segundo disco y nuestro EP. Actualmente tenemos a Javi con nosotros otra vez.

MRR: ¿Cómo grabaron "Todos terminamos igual"?
Jonpol: Pues, lo grabamos en un cuartito. En verdad, era más como un closet conectado a la parte de al lado de la casa de este chamaco, Coki. Él y otro chamaco más que yo conocía, Josean

Gaby: Basically, we recorded *Todos Terminamos Igual* after just a few months of having been playing. I was fifteen so I didn't have any idea of what I was doing. I didn't know how the record would turn out or that people would still be listening to it ten years later. It was completely DIY. I would steal shit from office supply stores to help make copies of it.

MRR: Everything you've said is why I like your band and why I like KBD and *Back to Front* compilations. You're obviously a real punk band.
Jonpol: Everyone always talks about that record sounding "KBD" or "garage." We didn't plan that sound out though. We just knew we were a punk band recording our little songs. We were amateurs. It's a luxury to put your stuff out all "pro" in Puerto Rico. There're people that do it but the money usually comes out of their own pocket. We didn't have any money and in a conservative Caribbean island nation without a strong history of rock'n'roll, punk is mostly a secret society kind of thing. It's for outcasts and it's not popular. There's no support here. You do this because you like it. We never really had any aspiration as a band. As islanders, we were isolated. Going on tour for us was driving to a show two hours away on the other side of the island. Our local scene was all we had and all we really cared about. Our goal was simply to participate within that.
Gaby: Most people in Puerto Rico who play punk do it because they feel it. No one here plays for the money. It's something else here. There're no labels.

MRR: Then what's up with you guys playing punk rock so good? I thought all the punks south of the border only listened to Napalm Death!?
Jonpol: I generally don't listen to metal.
Gaby: Look, there're bands that don't motivate. You can tell when people are doing something from the heart, for the love, making an effort to achieve something even though they don't have the means, or weren't necessarily born with that talent. You can also tell the people aren't doing that. Understand? It's not the same to structure something and plan it out. Napolnariz was something spontaneous.

MRR: Unfortunately, I am a fucking failure, failed out of high school and never learned to speak Spanish as a second language. I have no idea what you're saying in your lyrics. What would you say are some of the themes in your songs?
Jonpol: I would say the main theme in Napolnariz' songs is despair, but projected in a defiant way instead of a sad way, although that's probably in there somewhere too. Hopelessness, disgust, the world of drugs, the absence of love and being alone but also standing alone are also themes I would say are in Napolnariz' music... not seeing a worthwhile future, the street life.
Gaby: Our lyrics are about our daily lives, things that happen to us, circumstances, everything that happens in Puerto Rico—sex, drugs, rock'n'roll and lots of criminal thinking.

MRR: You mentioned that you're into the band Eskorbuto. What drew you to a band like that?
Jonpol: Just like them, we became disillusioned with politics and with being able to affect change. This, along with the fact that Eskorbuto were from the Basque Country, a place with similar political circumstances as where we're from, made us in Napolnariz and many other punks in Puerto Rico feel a strong connection to them. They also couldn't play too good and neither could we!
Gaby: Just as the Spanish government has shoved the Basques around, you gringos shove us around. In addition, what's that word? The *cynicism* that we live in Puerto Rico is what causes us to be attracted to a band like Eskorbuto. That's the word. That's it. That says it all.

MRR: How does being Puerto Rican, specifically because of the island's status as a colony of the United States, affect what you do musically? How does it affect your relationship with

(QEPD), dijeron que estaban montando un "estudio." Creo que habían grabado como otra cosa antes que hicieran nuestro disco y en realidad no tenían casi equipo. Yo creo que le dimos como cien pesos si acaso. Hicimos el disco en dos sesiones de fin de semana ya que todos nosotros teníamos nuestras vidas regulares que atender durante la semana.
Gaby: Básicamente, nosotros grabamos "Todos terminamos igual" después de haber estado tocando solo unos meses. Yo tenía quince así que no tenía ninguna idea de lo que estaba haciendo. Yo no sabía como el disco iba a resultar ni que la gente todavía lo estaría escuchando diez años después. Fue completamente DIY. Me robaba mierdas de los office supply para ayudar hacer las copias.

MRR: Por todo lo que han dicho es por lo que me gusta su banda y porque me gustan [las compilaciones Killed by Death] y las compilaciones Back to Front. Ustedes obviamente son una banda de punk real.
Jonpol: Todo el mundo siempre habla que esa grabación suena "*KBD*" o "*garage*." Pero nosotros no planeamos ese sonido. Solo sabíamos que éramos una banda de punk grabando nuestras cancioncitas. Nosotros éramos amateurs. Es un lujo sacar las cosas de uno to' "pro" en Puerto Rico. Hay gente que lo hace pero los chavos usualmente salen de sus propios bolsillos. Nosotros no teníamos chavos y en una pequeña isla-nación caribeña sin una fuerte tradición de rocanrol, el punk es mayormente una especie de sociedad secreta. Es para marginados y no es popular. Aquí no hay apoyo. Uno hace esto porque le gusta. Nosotros realmente nunca tuvimos ninguna aspiración como banda. Como isleños, estábamos aislados. Yendo de gira para nosotros era guiar dos horas pa' un show en el otro lado de la isla. Nuestra escena local era todo lo que teníamos y lo único que en realidad nos importaba. Nuestra meta era simplemente participar dentro de eso.
Gaby: La mayoría de la gente que toca punk en Puerto Rico lo hacen porque lo sienten. Aquí nadie toca por el dinero. Aquí es otra cosa. No hay sellos.

MRR: ¿Entonces qué hay con ustedes tocando punk rock tan bien? ¡Yo creía que todos los punks al sur de la frontera solo escuchaban a Napalm Death!
Jonpol: Yo generalmente no escucho metal.
Gaby: Mira, hay bandas que no motivan. Uno se da cuenta cuando la gente está haciendo algo de corazón, por el amor, haciendo un esfuerzo para lograr algo aunque no tengan los medios o no necesariamente haya nacido con ese talento. Uno también se da cuenta de la gente que no está haciendo eso. ¿Entiendes? No es lo mismo estructurar algo y planearlo. Napolnariz fue algo espontáneo.

MRR: Desafortunadamente, soy un fracaso, me colgué en la superior y nunca aprendí a hablar español como segundo idioma. Yo no tengo idea de lo que están diciendo en sus líricas. ¿Qué ustedes dirían que son algunos de los temas en sus canciones?
Jonpol: Yo diría que el tema central en las canciones de Napolnariz es la desesperación; pero proyectada de una manera desafiante en vez de una manera triste. Aunque eso probablemente está ahí en algún lado también. La falta de esperanza, el disgusto, el mundo de las drogas, la ausencia de amor y el estar solo pero además el estar parado solo también son temas que yo diría están en la música de Napolnariz… El no ver un futuro que vale la pena, la vida de la calle.
Gaby: Nuestras líricas son sobre nuestra vida cotidiana, las cosas que nos pasan a nosotros, circunstancias, todo lo que pasa en Puerto Rico – sexo, droga, rocanrol y mucho pensamiento criminal.

MRR: Ustedes mencionaron que les gusta la banda Eskorbuto. ¿Qué los atrajo a una banda como esa?
Jonpol: Igual que ellos, nosotros nos desilusionamos con la política

punk?

Jonpol: Well, Napolnariz' music has always concentrated more on the personal rather than the explicitly political, but let me just say I think Puerto Rico's colonial status is degrading. Puerto Ricans have been conditioned to believe that we are nothing without the US. That mentality is a consequence of decades of colonialism. The truth is that for the last hundred years, whenever Puerto Rico made serious attempts to become independent and self-sufficient, the US imperialist machine violently put these down so that it could keep controlling the island. Now that they don't really want us for anything anymore, we're just here.

Gaby: Puerto Rico's colonial status affects not only the punks here but also the youth of the nation as a whole because of the uncertainty of that status. In addition to that, our government is excessively corrupt; there is poor education and a lack of employment. Some of these are the reasons that have led us to become punk rockers. I'm a product of that. I'm a punk rocker. That's why I play in Napolnariz, that's why I'm part of Napolnariz and that's why I am how I am. The colonial status is not sane. That means the government is not sane and if the government is not sane the nation is not sane. Therefore, Puerto Rico is punk rock! We punk rockers are sane but not that sane ha-ha.

MRR: You told me that you would only do this interview in English if it were published in Spanish also. I thought that ruled because band interviews usually suck but I would say this one has some sense of purpose, doesn't it?

Jonpol: Yeah, cultural assimilation is a daily reality for us so, other than the fact that it's our primary language; we make it a point to

y con poder efectuar cambio. Esto, junto al hecho que Eskorbuto eran del País Vasco, un lugar con circunstancias políticas similares a las de donde nosotros vinimos, hizo que nosotros en Napolnariz y muchos otros punks en Puerto Rico sintieran una fuerte conexión con ellos. ¡Además, ellos no podían tocar muy bien y nosotros tampoco!

Gaby: Igual que el gobierno español ha restregado a los vascos, ustedes los gringos nos restriegan a nosotros. Además, ¿cuál es esa palabra? El *cinismo* que estamos viviendo en Puerto Rico es lo que causa que seamos atraídos a una banda como Eskorbuto. Esa es la palabra. Ya. Eso lo dice todo.

MRR: ¿Cómo el ser puertorriqueños, específicamente por el estatus de la isla como colonia estadounidense, afecta lo que ustedes hacen musicalmente? ¿Cómo afecta su relación con el punk?

Jonpol: Bueno, la música de Napolnariz siempre se ha concentrado más en lo personal en vez de lo explícitamente político pero déjame decirte que yo creo que el estatus colonial de Puerto Rico es degradante. Los puertorriqueños han sido condicionados a creer que no somos nada sin los Estados Unidos. Esa mentalidad es un resultado de décadas de colonialismo. La verdad es que durante los últimos cien años, cada vez que Puerto Rico ha hecho intentos serios para ser independiente y auto-suficiente, la máquina imperial estadounidense nos ha aplastado violentamente para poder seguir controlando a la isla. Ahora que realmente no nos quieren para nada, estamos quedaos.

Gaby: El estatus colonial de Puerto Rico no solo afecta a los punks aquí sino a toda la juventud de la nación por la incertidumbre de

sing in Spanish. Most Puerto Rican punk bands do too. Also, we wanted the people at home to be able to read the interview. Not everyone in Puerto Rico can read in English.
Gaby: I think it has a very big purpose since it's for a fanzine that reaches other parts of the world. It's time for people to realize that English isn't always number one, never has been number one and never will be number one. There's also punk in Spanish and it's very strong, not just from Puerto Rico but Latin America in general. I want people to know that we're one Latin America and each day we're stronger and more united and each day we're more against the Yankee Empire. Yeah, this interview has a purpose—that we're here in this fanzine and we can tell all the punk rockers around the world to come visit our island. Come visit Puerto Rico. Come see our bands. They're very good.

MRR: This last question might seem weird but I think that the answer could only be interesting... What question would you want me to ask you and how would you answer it? Or, just insult me for getting deep.
Jonpol: I would like you to ask me if Napolnariz is a band that promotes drugs, since it seems that people know us for our relation to the world of drugs as much as for our music. The answer is, no. We were very young when this band started and things quickly got out of hand for us as some of us started using drugs more and more as a way of dealing with our lives, or selling them to survive in a place that doesn't offer much of a future. I feel flattered that some of the young punk kids in Puerto Rico still like Napolnariz. Maybe they're feeling or going through some of the same shit we did, but I would never recommend to them that they deal with their problems in the way we did, as that can only make things worse, no matter how bad one feels. Don't ever be like us.
Gaby: The perfect answer to your question is: Come to Puerto Rico, try my island's mushrooms and we'll go to the rainforest and discuss it further. Since you want to get deep, I invite you to do so in this way.
Jonpol: Well, so much for my answer ha-ha!

Current Napolnariz discography (excluding demos and compilations):
Todos Terminamos Igual CD-R (2002)
Canciones Espantosas Para Vidas Destrozadas split CD-R with Anti-Sociales (2002)
Porque Me Rio Contigo No Quiere Decir Que Sea Tu Amigo CD (2003)
Somos Héroes 7" EP (2007)
Esperandote/Olvidandote 7" 45 (2012)

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napolnariz@hotmail.com
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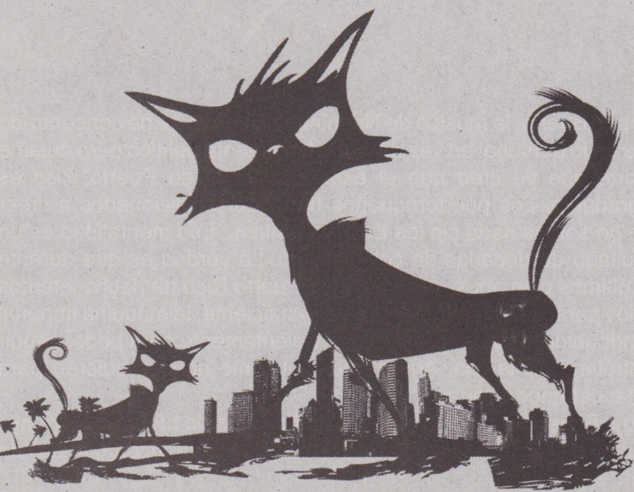

ese estatus. Además de eso, nuestro gobierno es excesivamente corrupto; hay desempleo y una educación pobre. Estas son algunas de las razones que nos han llevado a convertirnos en punk rockers. Yo soy un producto de eso. Yo soy un punk rocker. Por eso toco en Napolnariz, por eso soy parte de Napolnariz y por eso soy como soy. El estatus colonial no es sano. Eso significa que el gobierno no es sano y si el gobierno no está sano la nación no está sana. Por lo tanto, ¡Puerto es punk rock! Nosotros los punk rockers somos sanos pero no tan sanos jajá.

MRR: Ustedes me dijeron que solo harían esta entrevista en inglés si fuese publicada en español también. Yo pensé que eso ruleaba porque las entrevistas de bandas usualmente soquean pero yo diría que esta tiene algún sentido y propósito, ¿no?
Jonpol: Sí, la asimilación cultural es una realidad diaria para nosotros así que, además de que es nuestra primera lengua, nosotros cantamos en español con un propósito. La mayoría de las bandas de punk puertorriqueñas lo hacen también. Además, nosotros queríamos que la gente en casa pudiese leer la entrevista. No todo el mundo en Puerto Rico puede leer en inglés.
Gaby: Yo creo que tiene un propósito muy grande porque es para un fanzine que llega a otras partes del mundo. Es hora de que la gente se dé cuenta que el inglés no es siempre número uno, nunca ha sido número uno y nunca será numero uno. También hay punk en español y es muy fuerte, no solo en Puerto Rico pero en Latinoamérica en general. Yo quiero que la gente sepa que somos una Latinoamérica y que cada día estamos más fuertes y más unidos y que cada día estamos más en contra del imperio yanqui. Sí, esta entrevista tiene un propósito – que estamos aquí en este fanzine y podemos decirles a todos los punk rockers alrededor del mundo que vengan y visiten a nuestra isla. Vengan a visitar a Puerto Rico. Vengan y vean nuestras bandas. Son muy buenas.

MRR: Esta última pregunta quizás sea rara pero yo pienso que la respuesta solo puede ser interesante... ¿Qué ustedes quisieran que yo les preguntara y cómo la contestarían? O solo insúltenme por ponerme muy filosófico.
Jonpol: Yo quisiera que tú me preguntaras si Napolnariz es una banda que promociona las drogas ya que parece que la gente nos conoce por nuestra relación con el mundo de las drogas tanto como por nuestra música. La contestación es, no. Nosotros éramos muy joven cuando empezó esta banda y las cosas rápidamente se nos salieron de mano a lo que algunos de nosotros empezamos a usar drogas más y más como una manera de bregar con nuestras vidas, o vendiéndolas en un lugar que no ofrece mucho futuro. Me siento halagado que a algunos de los punkis en Puerto Rico todavía les guste Napolnariz. Quizás ellos están sintiendo o pasando por alguna de la misma mierda que nosotros pero no le recomendaría jamás ni nunca que breguen con sus problemas en la manera que nosotros lo hicimos ya que eso solo hace las cosas peor, no importa cómo uno se sienta. Nunca sean como nosotros.
Gaby: La respuesta perfecta a tu pregunta es – Ven a Puerto Rico, prueba los hongos de mi isla e iremos al Yunque a discutirlo más a fondo. Ya que quieres ponerte filosófico, te invito a que lo hagas de esa manera.
Jonpol: Se jodió mi respuesta jajá!

Discografía actual de Napolnariz (excluyendo demos y compilaciones):
Todos terminamos igual CD-R (2002)
Canciones espantosas para vidas destrozadas CD-R compartido con Anti-Sociales (2002)
Porque me río contigo no quiere decir que sea tu amigo CD (2003)
Somos héroes 7" EP (2007)
Esperandote/Olvidandote 7" 45 (2012)

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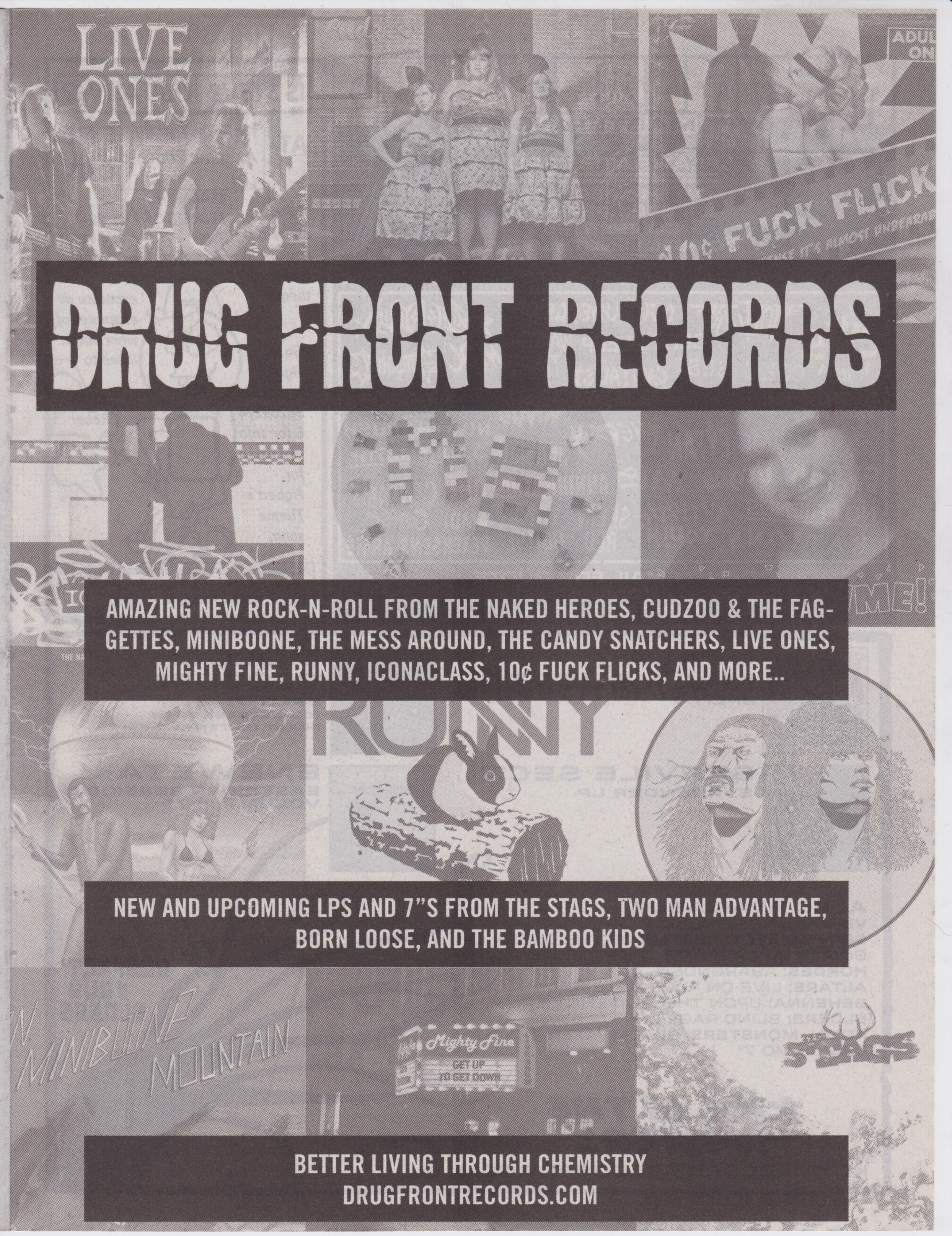
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VICTIMS

2012 TOUR DIARY [PART 2]

KORTRIJK

It's amazing how little sleep you can survive on whilst on tour. The breakfast wasn't free this morning so I decided to forget it and treat myself to another hour in bed. Of course, Andy told me when he came back up to the room that they were serving fresh scones and tea but the bastard was just trying to wind me up.

We met down in the reception around ten thirty. The Black Breath guys looked pretty wasted. Apparently they'd got to bed a couple of hours ago. Eric told me, actually he demonstrated, how Elijah was dancing at the bar last night. Seeing that would have almost been worth sacrificing sleep for.

Those poor dogs were still in the Jeep this morning. Almost broke my heart. God knows how long they've been there. I regret not reporting the cunt who owned them to the police. What the fuck is wrong with people? We should have complained to the hotel receptionist...I feel shit that we didn't.

The venue today was something else. I've been to a few places like this in the Low Countries, it seems to be quite a standard on the club circuit here. The place was brand spanking new, clean and clinical, the people running the place very professional. The treatment you get at these places is off the hook and whilst it's really appreciated I can't help but wonder what these guys know about putting on a punk show. I think these places are state funded. They must be.

The stage in the venue was half the size of the hall-sized room it was situated in. I guess this place holds around five hundred people, but the people running the place told me they could minimize the place by drawing these big black curtains across the width of the room. I guess we'll be doing that tonight.

Dinner was a bit of a trip today. Some guy from the venue, apparently very serious about his cooking, set up a stove at the end of the long table that stood in the centre of the dressing room, and spent about two hours making our dinner. The food was unbelievable too! Artichoke soup to start followed by a mushroom risotto. I wonder what the chances are of being provided with such culinary delights in the UK? Slim to fuck-all I guess. Although the show in Nottingham tomorrow is a real punk DIY set-up, so we should be OK there at least.

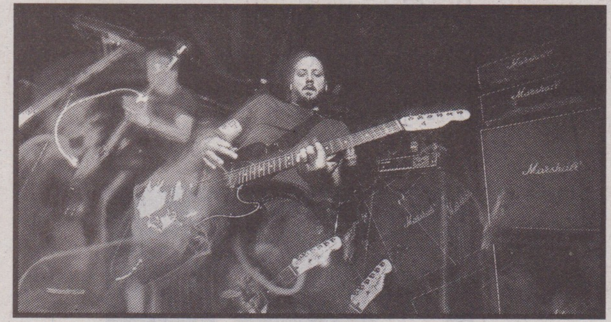
The show tonight was pretty much as I expected. There were about eighty people in the venue, and with the curtains indeed halving the room it looked half decent. It is a shame to think though that as luxurious as the hospitality is at these places, if this same crowd was in a small DIY space somewhere, the show would have been insane. Some guy after the show told me about a venue called the Pits, which is small DIY space in town. We'll have to play there next time we go out on our own. Although I'll be coming here for dinner!

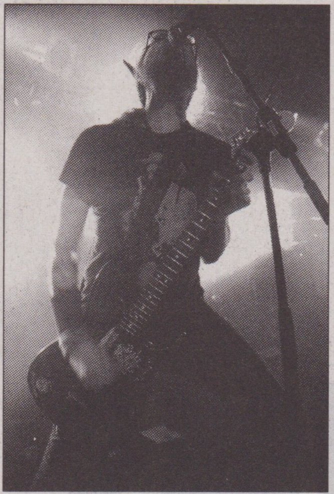
Claes is having a bad time at the moment. Tonight he didn't even make it through the third song. I was out front watching them and noticed he was having a hard time, started shaking his hands and looking really shaky. Feel so bad for him. He soon disappeared. By the time I got to the back stage area Elijah was already taking care of him. I hope we can get this sorted, terrible to see him like this. Thankfully he was better a short while later, but he looked bad for a while there. Tormented played the rest of their set as a three piece. Had to crack up when Drette tried to explain to the crowd that Claes was OK, he was just having some problems with a medical condition. He couldn't find the words in English though and it came out as, "Just to let you know our guitar player Claes is OK, he's just...a bit tired." Haha, fuck knows what the crowd made of that.

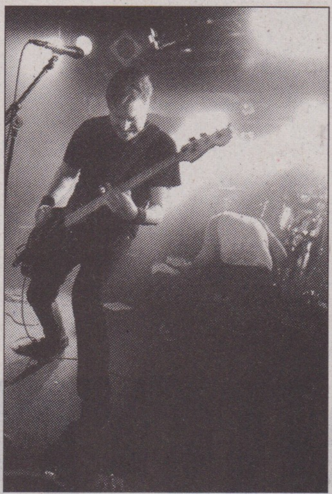
After the show we loaded out on the promoter's promise that it was safe to leave the gear in the van overnight. The hotel we were staying at was only a couple of minutes walk away. I had no idea what to expect but in accordance with how the rest of the day had been, we were put up in a four star hotel. Couldn't believe it. Now this we definitely won't be getting in the UK!

Upon check-in we're told that those of us sleeping on the first floor must be quiet since there were athletes sleeping in the rooms there, and they needed their rest. This seemed like a very odd situation being half pissed, thought it was really funny.

The Tormented guys and Jon were at the bar waiting for us, as was Eric. We stood around waiting to be served, seemingly much to the annoyance of a rather snobby looking crowd of old cunts who were sat down to what looked like a dinner party, although there was seemingly no staff serving them. It was only them and us in the place, but by the tone of their words, whatever they were saying, they didn't seem too chuffed to have our company. Eventually the night desk attendant, who was a timid looking, pimply teenager, came to our







aid. He asked us if we would not rather sit in the other bar, obviously at the wish of the old cunts in the restaurant. I was pretty scoobied but was happy enough to sit anywhere as long as I could get a drink. It wasn't as if we were being loud in any way...I guess the old fuckers just didn't like the cut of our jib.

Anyway, the kid opens up another bar on the other side of the reception, just for us. Fucking magic! Couldn't quite believe it. The poor kid had no idea really, he explained as much to us, saying he's never worked behind the bar before. We order a beer each, which he copes with well enough, but then I spot the rather stunning selection of single malts behind the bar and order a Lagavulin sixteen year. This throws him. He literally throws about fifteen centilitres of the stuff into a large cognac glass! He tells me he has to check with his boss what it costs and gets on the phone. "Oops, it seems like this whiskey is really expensive. It's eleven Euros." I almost bite the poor fucker's hand off! Considering the fact I've got about half the fucking bottle in my glass, I'd say that's pretty cheap. I park my arse on the sofa beside Drette, more than chuffed.

The Kid asks us if we want anything else, to which we tell him we're good for now thanks. He tells us if there's anything else we need just to come get him and he heads back to the reception. Andy immediately leans over the bar and goes to re-fill his glass, but somebody spots a camera in the corner so he refrains. Andy goes off in search of the young kid again.

Looking forward to tomorrow. My mates Snitch and Kimmins are coming up from Corby and then I'm heading back in the car with them to stay at my parents' place for the night. Can't play Nottingham and not visit my parents. The bed in my old room is still the coziest I've ever slept in and I'm not passing up a chance to spend a night in it. And it's always great to see my parents, even if only to catch breakfast with them.

NOTTINGHAM

In keeping with last night's hospitality the breakfast was top notch. Most of the other guys were there, tucking in. Jon was nowhere to be seen, but that's hardly shocking. He looked pretty bad by the time I went to bed last night. Andy and I sit down next to an extremely chuffed looking Drette. "They have a guy who is frying eggs to order!" a smile of delight spread across his face.

With a journey to Nottingham ahead of us, which included the hassle of getting a ferry from Calais across the channel, we had to get going. The drive to Calais only took an hour or so but we had a bit of fucking around at the ferry port, which put us back a bit. We drove through passport control, then had to get out of the van and walk through another passport control, only to then be told the ticket office was outside the ferry port area. We had to drive back out, buy tickets and then repeat the whole process. One of the passport officers joked with Jocke, "It's not too late to turn back you know!" Cue more piss-taking at the expense of myself and the motherland.

The rest of the journey was long and uneventful. The ferry took longer than I thought and when we mat land, I knew we'd be struggling to make the get-in time of six pm. Tonight's show is a small DIY floor show though, so hopefully it will be cool. I love playing these shows. After three nights of playing stages that separate the band from the crowd, I was buzzing in anticipation of tonight. This was a day that Vincent, Black Breath's booker, had struggled to pin anything down, in other words struggled to get a guaranteed fee. That being the case, we all agreed it's better to play a DIY show on a door deal than have a day off, and of course, the DIY show is infinitely more fun.

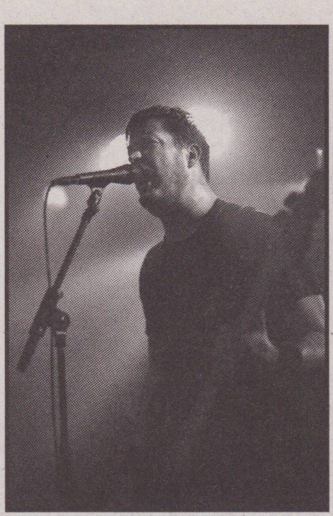
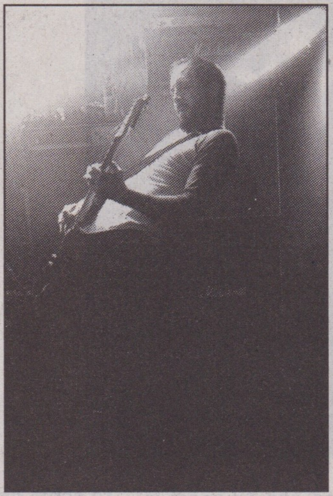
We pulled up at almost exactly the same time as Black Breath, who had made the same ferry as us. Boulty, who was putting the show on, was running around trying to get stuff sorted. I felt bad since we were about an hour late, but he was cool. He understood that we'd had a journey from Belgium to contend with today. The venue was a recording studio/rehearsal space situated on the second floor of a run down building somewhere on the outskirts of the city centre. There were already a lot of people milling around when we got there. Wolfbeast were in the middle of setting up due to the uncertainty of our arrival. The first thing I noticed was the steepness of the iron staircase leading to the venue. The thought of loading in up that gave me a knot in my stomach. Thankfully there was an elevator though and we hurriedly unloaded the vans and filled it.

By the time we had dumped the gear in a corridor behind the room where the gig would be held, Wolfbeast were about ready to go. Considerably stressed from rushing around, the cold beer in my hand Kimmins gave me when I finally got to catch up with them was a God sent. Wolfbeast blasted through their set and the place was pretty packed. I guess there must have been over a hundred people in this tiny room. After a long day travelling, the boredom, the tiredness, it was all suddenly worth it again. I was buzzing by now.

Another childhood friend of mine who now lives in Nottingham, James, also came along. Was great to see him as always. He's just been in the States for the first time, playing with his band Fists who were touring with Obits. After Wolfbeast's set we quickly set up the rest of the gear that the three touring bands were using and then I managed to get away for a swift jar with my mates. In typical James fashion, he was apprehensive about going to the pub right next door, "It's the fucking wild west in there!"

We headed back to the venue in time to see the second half of Tormented's set. The place was packed and they sounded great. They were having a blinding show and the crowd was loving it. Best of all, I was delighted to see Claes, albeit a little sedated, still on stage. Fucking hero! He made the whole set and there was a collective feeling of elation for him shared between the lot of us. We had to form a cue to give the fucker a hug after their show was done.

I loved every last second of our set tonight. There is nothing quite like playing a packed out floor show. It didn't even matter that I

broke a string during the first song, or indeed another later on during the gig. I love when you're one with the crowd, just a big communal feeling, no band, no audience, we're all just doing this together. It was fucking great! And then there's always an extra buzz when you have a few old friends dotted about the crowd. It was a sweaty gig but despite the long day, the adrenalin outweighs any tiredness I'd been feeling earlier and it was for me, without doubt, the most fun show of the tour so far.

The drive back to Corby is fucking terrifying for the most part. Kimmins and another friend Tom, are in the back, a bit sauced up, demanding Snitch cranks the volume up on the car stereo. They're playing some bluegrass band doing Guns'n'Roses covers. The version of "Mr. Brownstone" is actually fucking awesome to be fair though. Anyway, I'm sat up front with Snitch who is driving fast as fuck along the dark country roads that lead the back way to Corby. I enquire a couple of times as to why he's driving so fast to which he replies he's only doing the speed limit. Not sure that doing eighty on a sixty road qualifies as keeping to the speed limit but what the fuck do I know? I love the cunt but he scares the fuck out of me when I'm sat beside him in a car and he's the one behind the wheel.

I get back to my parents house, the house I still call home even though I haven't lived there for eleven years, around midnight. Glad to be home and relieved to be alive. Even though it's late, when I walk through the door my dad appears in the dark at the top of the stairs wearing nothing but his Kecks. He comes down to join for a late night cup of tea and a chat. It's good to be home, even if only for a few hours.

LONDON

It's always great to see my parents, even if it's only for a few hours. A night in my old bed, mum pestering around me in the morning making me breakfast. They'd even gone to the trouble of buying Linda McCartney's veggie sausages. I remember when I first told them I'd became a vegetarian it was as if I was coming out of the closet. My dad confronted me about it the first time I was home after having told them..."What's this you don't like bacon any more?" Typical dad.

Playing in London certainly has its good and bad sides. I always get to catch up with a load of mates who live here and the shows are normally great but the traffic in this city can drive you fucking mad. And there is nowhere to park the van; you have to load out in twenty minutes straight out of the van with cars flying past you before rushing off, in the vain hope of finding somewhere to park the van legally. Peter decided to simply take the parking ticket and leave his van and trailer parked conveniently outside the loading doors of the Underworld.

We went to a new bar around the corner, which is a Brew Dog Brewery establishment. Johan and Jon joined us, after having had an hour or so to catch up. I had a couple of fine tap ales and a great veggie pizza. By the time we were done though I was fucking bloated and the senses were a little blurred. No more beer until after the show for me.

It was another great show tonight. Kind of like last night, but on a stage. The place was packed out and although I was struggling with the sound again, the atmosphere both on the stage and in the crowd nullified that problem. It's something I'm going to have to sort out though. I had some huge mohawked punk rocker guy going crazy for the whole set in front of me. I saw Kev down in front of Jon, seemingly having a good time of it too. It was again ridiculously hot on stage and I was pretty fucked by the end of the show.

For some reason it always seems to be the case that merch sales are a lot lower in the UK, a lot of bands I know say they always struggle with that particular problem on these shores, even when the shows have been great. Tonight though the records and shirts were flying out. I had a great time hanging out at the merch table with the band and our friends. For some reason I wasn't really in the mood for drinking that much but I was more than content just to hang out. Typical London though, about fifteen minutes after Black Breath were done, they started kicking us and everyone else out. Thanks for your time boys now fuck off! We hung out for a little longer in the dressing room before eventually being chased from there too. We loaded the gear out into the van and literally as soon as the last bag was out, a bouncer came behind us and closed the doors. Good old London hospitality.

The hostel was a bit of a drive away, just south of the river over in Borough. I sat next to Jon in the back, who had purchased a two litre bottle of Strongbow that he was more than happy to pass around the van. We found the hostel easy enough but parking the van was a whole other matter. We dropped the guys off with the bags and Johan and I drove off in search of other alternatives.

We must have driven around for half an hour or so and found fuck all. The only thing we could find were places that were for residents only, between the hours of eight am and six pm. Being tired and pissed off we figured that it was worth it just to pay the fine, since it worked out cheaper than a car park anyway. How fucked up is that really? Fuck it, we'd chance the fine. Certainly not getting up and leaving before eight...

We get to the hostel where Andy is waiting with a room key for us. The place is called Bed and Bars and it is exactly that. There are some dormitories upstairs where we'll be sleeping and there is a rowdy karaoke bar full of pissed, young English trash singing shite like Oasis. Jocke asked Neil if he was coming for a pint but he refrained, saying it reminded him of everything he hates about the USA. Funny that, I know exactly how he feels.

We head up to the room where Claes is busy with his computer looking for alternatives to a free day we have coming up. After Cardiff there is a spare day before we play Bordeaux. We were originally supposed to be playing Paris, which would have been perfect but that fell on its arse. The label that put the Tormented record out, which are based in France, have said they've sorted a gig out in Nantes if we want it. It will be no pay but

free accommodation and food, as well as the chance to sell merch. It's a long way though. We'll have to sleep on it.

We head down to the bar and into a scene of utter nonsense. Loads of chavs singing shite songs, pissed on shite beer. Jocke, Drette, Robban and Jon are hanging out at the end of the bar, observing it all with wide grins on their faces. This is England, chaps.

I finally drifted off sometime around four am, the possessed-by-a-demon like sounds of snoring bellowing from one of the other bunks in the dark dormitory...

MANCHESTER

For the first time since we left home, I felt really tired this morning. Johan looked tired too. He's done pretty much all the driving so far. Johan and Claes had decided to share the driving on this tour, but obviously with the shit situation Claes has landed in, having to take medication that doesn't allow him to drive, it's pretty much been on Johan. Claes feels bad about it but the most important thing for him and for us is that he's OK. Don't want to see Claes in the state he was in in Kortrijk again...

The journey to Manchester took around five hours, about half of which was just getting out of London. We pull up to the venue around three-thirty, about a half hour ahead of schedule. We're in the Salford area of Manchester, just the other side of the canal from the city centre. We played here a lot back in the day with Speedhorn and it was always a good show. This part of Salford though really is desolate looking. Johan looks pretty fucking knackered and opts to stay in the van and wait for load-in, as does Jon, but the rest of us go for a wander around the estate. It looks like a set from *This is England*. It's as if after the Germans blitzed the city nobody bothered to rebuild this area.

The venue itself, which is situated right in the middle of all this, is a really cool place. A vibrant arts centre with painting studios and graphic design offices it's a buzz with artistic energy and stands in stark contrast to its surroundings. The people here are all very friendly too, very talkative and happy to help out with whatever we need. The gig room is pretty cool too. Low ceiling, brick walls, sofas dotted around the space a little off the sides and the stage is low. The only thing that slightly spoils it are these two supporting pillars in the middle of the stage. I'll have to be careful not to smash my guitar into them.

After last night's fucking around I was hoping for a hassle-free night tonight and was therefore delighted to hear that we'd be sleeping in an apartment that was housed within the venue's complex. Perfect. It's not very often you get that in the UK, it's more of a mainland thing. It's a nice feeling to just park the van, load out and know that you don't have to move anything until the morning. I think Johan is looking forward to a well-earned piss up tonight. It feels like there is a party in the air tonight, everyone safe in the knowledge that they can just go crash whenever they want to.

It was another great show tonight. The three UK shows have all gone beyond expectations so far. The place was pretty crowded and there was a good buzz during the set. I managed to successfully avoid the pillars and my guitar remained in tact, although as usual I broke another string. Didn't kill the energy on stage though. It was a little weird playing a stage that was brightly lit for the entirety of the show; it really felt like we were playing a community centre. The crowd seemed to be into the gig though. Strangely, this was Victims' first ever gig in Manchester. Great first show...

The venue cleared out and we were invited to stay for a lock-in. I love a lock-in, what could possibly be better than having a bar all to yourself to have a party in with your friends? Fucked if I can think of anything! Claes and Mark chose to take advantage of a good night's sleep, but everyone else was at the bar, along with the good folks who'd booked the show. We had some good music, plenty of great beer and lots of banter. I had a long chat with Eric about our favourite sports, baseball and football, and the problems with the money-driven businesses they've both become. As I was talking to hear him I could feel my words beginning to slur.. And then the shots started to come out.

I got into long chats with Elijah and Jamie about hardcore and touring and with Johan about his driving and how I appreciate all he does for us. Jocke and Jon are having a slurred argument somewhere about black metal and death metal and which is better. Jon is pretty sauced, but then again we all are tonight. Earlier Elijah had chatted with Jon for about twenty minutes about Nasum without even knowing Jon was in the band. "No way man! Killer!" was the reaction from our friend the Wizard when he finally clocked on.

It's around three-thirty in the morning and I'm really starting to feel drunk. Not shit-faced but I'm getting to the point where if I drink much more then I'm going to end up there. Andy is looking like he's in the same boat as we converse at the bar. Andy is doing his best to convince himself that he's done drinking for the night.

Andy, Johan and Jon leave together a short while later, waving in unison as they exit, looking like they're on a TV game show or something. Tickles me somewhat. I stay for one last beer before finally calling it a night, by now feeling totally fucked. Jamie, Drette, Elijah and Eric are the last left, along with Emma who has been doing a stellar job of looking after the bands all night. She still is by the looks of it, as she's corking open another bottle of Jagermeister and threatening them with shots.

Eric is not far behind me though and we head back to the dormitory in the band flat. When we arrive Jon is still awake. He's climbed up into the bunk above mine and is fumbling around trying to remove his jeans. Seems to be having a hard time of it. I notice Jon is now naked in bed. Naked, except for his bandanna and gaffer-taped glasses. "Why are you naked?" I manage to ask him between bellows of laughter.

"You love it. But you can't look at it" is Jon's reply to that question. He repeats this line over and over again, pissing himself laughing. I don't even want to look at the clock by the time my head slams into the pillow, I just know tomorrow is going to be a rough one...

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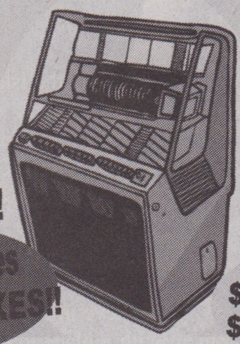

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There's nothing quite like the experience of seeing a band for the first time and being blown away by their performance. Seeing La Armada in Hartford last year was just such an experience. Hailing from Chicago by way of the Dominican Republic, La Armada brings a raw intensity to their live performance that few can match. Their recent self-titled LP on Fat Sandwich records captures that live experience and compresses it into a slab of vinyl that is nothing less than one of the best releases of this year. Though their tour schedule is relentless, Mani from La Armada found time to talk on the phone about La Armada's history, the creative process behind their new album and their dedication to the DIY punk ethic.

Interview by Paul J. Comeau
Photos by Alena Heath

La Armada is:
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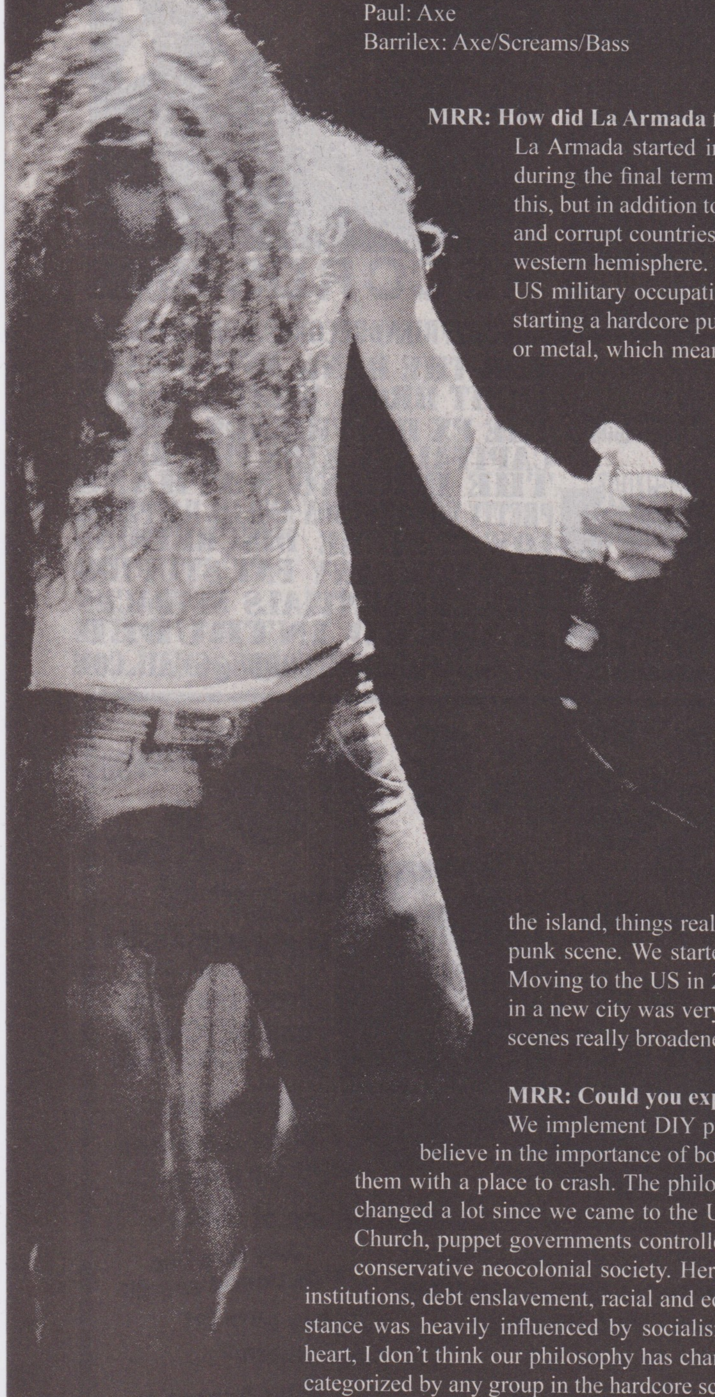


LA AR

MRR: How did La Armada first get started? How has it evolved over time?

La Armada started in 2000, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. We all grew up in the '90s, during the final term of Balaguer's 22-year "Democratic" regime. Not sure how many of you know this, but in addition to overpaid baseball players, the DR is also one of the most Catholic, conservative and corrupt countries of the third world. We also share the island with Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. We've been subject to 30 years of General Trujillo's fascist dictatorship and two US military occupations (1916-1924, 1965-1966). Let's just say back then (in the '90s), the idea of starting a hardcore punk band wasn't the most popular. I remember everyone wanted to play pop punk or metal, which meant you were either writing songs about girlfriends or Satan. We love both metal and punk, and this definitely shows in our music—but we were never down with the bullshit and the glitter of the metal scene. We wanted to play heavy angry music, but we also felt the need to talk about relevant issues affecting Dominican society at the time. In the beginning, we played covers of '80s hardcore bands from Latin America, Spain and the US. Once the Internet became accessible on the island, things really took a turn for us and we became more involved with the international DIY punk scene. We started writing our own music around 2003 and recorded our first demo that year. Moving to the US in 2007 had the greatest impact on us as a band. Even though starting from scratch in a new city was very hard for us at first; touring, networking and getting more exposure to different scenes really broadened our influences both politically and musically.

MRR: Could you explain what the philosophy of the band is?

We implement DIY punk ethics, both in our music, and in the way we interact with people. We still believe in the importance of booking all-ages shows in collective spaces, feeding touring bands, and providing them with a place to crash. The philosophy of the band is also very present in the content of our lyrics, which have changed a lot since we came to the US. Back in the DR our songs dealt with the oppressive power of the Catholic Church, puppet governments controlled by multinational corporations, and the racism, sexism and homophobia of a conservative neocolonial society. Here in the US we've taken up global themes, like world dominance by financial institutions, debt enslavement, racial and economic segregation, xenophobia and gentrification. Although our first political stance was heavily influenced by socialism, and many other -isms, we don't express any single political doctrine. At heart, I don't think our philosophy has changed all that radically—it has always been anti-establishment—but we can't be categorized by any group in the hardcore scene; we tend to follow the beat of our own drum.

MRR: What brought you to the US?

I think it's pretty incredible, the fact that I'm here today doing an *MRR* interview with you. If you knew where I came from you would too.... I've always been convinced that everyone out there needed to see this band live at least once. I think that brought us here. Touring was non-existent at the time and we also got to a point where we felt like we were running out of options for keeping the band active. Of course we also had some motivation from one of the worst economic and political crises of the past decade. During the early 2000s, the DR was going through a transitional period: a new government, free trade agreements, tension in Haiti, etc. All levels of society were deeply affected including the small punk scene. Things went from bad to worse—venues were hard to find, equipment was terrible and people didn't have the energy anymore. Many bands ended up breaking up; people

quit the scene and moved on. I had a few US contacts at the time that were helping us out with a small distro we ran in the DR. I started networking, asking around about how to relocate the band to the States. In 2006 we moved to Pensacola, FL. Spent a year working, planning the next move, and getting back on our feet as a band (buying new gear, a touring van, etc). During our stay in Florida, the group This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb also helped us quite a bit and pointed us in the right direction.

MRR: And how come Chicago?
We've always been fans of Chicago hardcore. In our beginnings, we used to listen to Los Crudos, MK-Ultra, Charles Bronson, Tras de Nada and Youth Against. All these bands were so fast, angry and in-your-face and the fact that most of them had Latino members and were singing in Spanish was inspiring to us, and to some degree, influenced what we are doing today. Around 2005, La Armada was asked to be part of a compilation CD entitled *Hardcore or Die*. It was released by South Side Chicago's DIY label Southkore records and it featured hardcore punk bands from the US and South America. A year later we were asked to play the Chicago "Latino punk fest," headlined by Los Crudos. That was probably one of the most intense shows we've ever played. We made a few good contacts with other labels and bands and in 2007 we officially moved to Chicago. It was kind of cliquey at first. It's always hard being an outsider, and while there is a culture of Hispanic punk in this city, the fact that we were Dominican punks fresh off the boat was kind of intimidating for both Americanized Latinos and white kids. In general, the Chicago

MADA

scene has been supportive of us, from bands, to record labels, to everyone in the activist scene. We love our Chicago folks!

MRR: What's the punk scene in the Dominican Republic like? How would you compare it to the scene here, and other places you've been on tour?
Being into punk and metal in a place like the DR was no easy task. You had to be cool with the fact that everyone looked at you as a freak, a social outcast. Having a tattoo meant that you were a delinquent, having a piercing, or weird hair meant that you were gay or a drug addict. People constantly yelled shit at you on the street and the police fucked with you on a daily basis. Not to mention very few employers would hire you. The DR is so small that every weird kid who was into "alternative music" knew each other; there was a lot of crossover between genres. Most shows involved a death metal band, a hardcore band and a ska-punk band. Things are more distinct in the US. Despite the inconveniences, the Dominican scene has remained active. At its peak, we organized shows for international acts like Czolgoz, Manolo Kabezabolo, Strung Out, Tropiezo, Juventud Crasa, Death by Stereo and Choking Victim, whose singer (also singer for Leftover Crack) complained the whole time about how Dominicans had "no culture." He refused to leave his hotel room and see the sights because he'd "been to Mexico before, and it's all the same thing." We also had a scene review written for *MRR* a few years ago, unfortunately very few things that concerned the DR punk scene were published, instead we got to read about Mykel Board's nights of debauchery with a local prostitute (Hi Mykel!)

MRR: How often do you get back to the island?
We were able to get back this past December to play shows and showcase some of our new material. Before that, we hadn't been back to the island since 2005, most of which was due to immigration issues.

MRR: When we set up the interview, you mentioned the band had taken a year off recently. Why did you take time off and what were you all doing during the break?
We took a break because our guitar player moved to New York. That was in 2010. We took a year off because he had a job offer. The rest of us were writing new music and planning extensive touring for 2011. We started playing again in the summer of 2011, writing material for the new record, and touring.

MRR: How is touring the US different from touring in the DR?
Basically there is no touring in the DR. You can only play Santo Domingo and Santiago, the second largest city, so obviously touring the US is a very different experience. We had very limited resources back in the DR; for most shows we had to share gear with five other bands and on many occasions power was down and we depended on a generator to run the show. Everyone would come out to support though. It's ironic how touring any mayor city in the US you can easily play a show with good bands and a decent sound and no one shows up. Some people here take things for granted.

MRR: Touring internationally, what is that experience like for you?
To be honest, although it is in our plans, we haven't had a chance to do much touring on an international level. Besides the DR and the US we've only played Puerto Rico, which is always a great experience. We've learned a lot in PR, there's a bunch of talented bands that we admire over there. When we first visited PR in 2003 people were a little skeptical. Dominicans in PR are mostly known for being a source of cheap labor, and for being Merengue and Bachata fans. It was the first time anyone heard of a hardcore punk band from the DR.

MRR: Your self-titled album was released on Fat Sandwich records this past spring. What was the writing process for that album like and how did it differ from your past releases?
We always try to come up with something new. Since we've been in the US, we've been in touch with a lot of different sub-genres, a lot of different music and we've been like sponges absorbing what all that has to offer. We have taken on elements of grindcore, powerviolence, D-beat and crust, and transformed that into something different. Our past releases had songs that were written, recorded and produced weeks prior to being recorded. Studio time was very limited in the DR, so we never really had a chance to find the sound we were looking for. We kind of did things backwards on this album. Before we recorded these songs, we spent a few years on the road playing them live. I think songs go through a transformational process when you start playing them live and you capture the energy of the crowd, and that goes with the song too, and it changes the final product.

MRR: You talked about your process as one of synthesis, making something new out of everything that's influenced you. Was your process similar when you first started playing and writing songs? How has the band's sound evolved over time?
Before we even heard of metal or punk rock we first listened to Wilfrido Vargas, Fania All-Stars, Bob Marley, Johnny Ventura and Celia Cruz. Afro-Caribbean music was so present in our lives, that by the time we got our hands on stuff like Slayer, Dead Kennedys, Sepultura or the Bad Brains, our musical ear was already quite developed. We were music junkies. "Heavy Rock" was such a new and fascinating thing to us that we just could not conform to listening to only one genre. We wanted to hear everything out there. At first, we were merely trying to reproduce the sound of whatever band we were into at the time, but after years of playing

together and experimenting with different things, we've finally created something that is essentially a hybrid, a sound unique to us.

MRR: Where did you record?
The recording was very DIY. There was no fancy studio, nothing like that. It's pretty much a computer, a mixer and a preamp, and that was it. It was done with a friend Juan Carlos "Kanky" Lora; he's a drummer and an engineer, also from the Dominican Republic. He understood what we were trying to do and allowed us to play a big role in the production process.

MRR: Your new record has been described as your first "proper release," by Fat Sandwich. What makes this release special compared to previous albums?
Recording-wise this is the first time we got the sound we wanted, which had to do with our engineer, and a lot of years of getting it wrong. Concept-wise, it was the first time we sat down as a band and figured out how to get our point across. So everything from the artwork to the music to the lyrics is thematically connected. Whereas the previous releases were collections of whatever songs we had written at the time. We wanted people to look and listen to the album and see us live and go "Oh, now I get it."

MRR: You talked earlier about how coming to the US has helped you evolve politically. Do you see music as a tool for political change, and in what way?
I do see music as a tool for political change. That is one of the things that La Armada has brought to the scene since we started. In that sense, we don't limit ourselves to just playing the punk scene. We've done shows with hip-hop artists, with folk artists, we've also organized a few fundraisers for relevant causes like the rebuilding of a music school in Gaza that was bombed by Israeli forces, the Chicago Books to Prisoners Program, and the "America Libre festival," a Political Hip-Hop fest hosted every year in the DR.

MRR: I love the viewpoints expressed in your lyrics, especially the strong pro-environment, anti-capitalist stances.
We wanted to make a critique that would go beyond mainstream environmentalism and rather talk about the green capitalism issue. Some of the most fucked up corporations in the world are just putting a green tag on their products, allowing first world consumers to perpetuate capitalism by giving lip service to environmentalism.

MRR: What are your thoughts on Occupy Wall Street?
We haven't been working directly with this particular movement, but a lot of people that we appreciate and respect are very involved. Whether or not you agree with everything OWS stands for, the importance of the specific issues this movement addresses is unquestionable. With OWS, class issues are being put on the table. Everyday, more people ask themselves how it is possible that while the average worker in this country is constantly being laid off, funding for social programs are being cut, and thousands of families are losing their homes; corporations, CEO's, and bankers are making record profits. Another thing that has become apparent is the importance of the Internet as a tool against state violence that exposes what's going on beyond the coverage of corporate media. All over the Internet, millions of Americans watched the NYPD brutally beat and arrest everyone just moments after it happened. This was definitely a turning point for this movement and it opened many eyes to the role of police in a capitalist society.

MRR: Is there an Occupy Group in Chicago?
Yes, there is an Occupy group in Chicago. There are also a couple of collateral occupy movements working in different communities, we got Occupy the Hood, Occupy Rogers Park and Occupy el Barrio in Pilsen. There was a NATO people's summit on May 20 at the Petrillo Bandshel (Jackson Dr. and Columbus Dr.)

MRR: What's the future of La Armada?
Getting the band in front of as many people as possible. In other words, touring and more touring. We are playing "Connecticut Punk Fest 2012", in New London CT, and Baltimore's "Punx Picnic" in Maryland, among other shows this summer. We are also planning a west coast tour this fall, an east coast tour this winter and possibly some international dates for next year.

For more of La Armada check out:
www.laarmadahc.com
www.fatsandwichrecords.com
FB: La Armada

Interview by Lydia Athanasopoulos.
Photos by Martin Sorrondeguy.

***The Estranged** and the **Red Dons** are two of those bands that just stick well together; like coffee and cigarettes or gin and tonic. Members of both of these Portland bands have been in projects that had captured my attention many years before. So when the Red Dons and the Estranged emerged, I knew that each band would have something new to contribute to the already existing, diverse and exciting landscape of punk that they had helped shape with their previous endeavors.*

In 2010 the Estranged release their infectiously dark and brooding album The Subliminal Man. I played it for weeks on end; they quickly turned into months, then years. This post-punk gem of a record still stands immensely strong; melancholic and enchanting as ever, it experiments with a new sound that aims straight for the heart and chills to the bone, while still ringing familiar, like an old habit or unresolved heartache.

The Red Dons, have been relentlessly releasing stellar records over several years now, with angst-ridden punk rock, doused in melodic urgency and lyrical tension. Their latest EP, Ausländer, is yet more proof of their ability to cross boarders, both literally and musically.

Normally scattered across different countries and continents, these two bands recently came together and went on tour around the US. I went to both their Bay Area shows and it was my great pleasure to catch up with them after they rocked our socks off at Thrillhouse records in San Francisco! Enjoy!

MRR: Please introduce yourselves for the video recorder!

Mark, Estranged, guitar.
Derrick, Estranged, bass guitar.
Keith, Estranged, drums.
Daniel/Hajji, Red Dons, bass.
Doug, Red Dons, guitar, vocals.
Zach, Red Dons, guitar.
Richie, I'm in Red Dons. I play the drums.

MRR: You're on tour right now, going up and down the coast. Of course, this is not your first tour; how has it been so far and what's it like revisiting places?

Zach: Both these bands have toured with each other before. We've done a full-scale US tour together, so we kind of knew what to expect from each other and whatnot. It makes things kind of easier once you've already been on the road with people. And doing a West Coast thing—I mean the last time we toured together was a couple years ago and we all have different lives now. So, we can only tour for so long now. People get married, like Doug over here, he's got a big rock on his hand. But we just thought a little twelve-day stint, no days off would be fun and it was. We've had a blast so far. We have one show left, the shows have been good for the most part…

Doug: This tour is twelve days. In 2008 we did like, a little over a month with The Estranged. I think what's cool about this tour, and these bands in general, is that since we all live in different places and have different lives, it's about seeing each other and hanging out. The shows and all, that's the cherry on top. But it's funny, because a lot of bands dread

being stuck in a van together because they already see each other every day. But for us it's kind of more a case of 'this is awesome, I'm going to be stuck in a van with my best friends for a month!' That's kind of why we really wanted to do a tour with Estranged. And why the Red Dons, even though we're all spread out in different cities and countries make touring a priority.

MRR: Some of you are spread out, living in different countries; the Red Dons' latest EP was written in five different countries and recorded in Sweden. You're more punks of the world it seems.

Hajji: Yeah, we'll play the last show and then we'll fly back tomorrow. Zach: The short answer is that this record took three days. Doug got into town and we had been practicing, just me and Richie and Andy, the guitar player before me who has an unnatural ability to remember things that I don't remember.

Doug: He basically reminds us how to play all our songs. Zach: And then we started practicing with Daniel, because he got here a little earlier, and then Doug got into town and we practiced once for about seven or eight hours, and then we recorded two songs the next day and then we went on tour the day after that. So, this particular tour was interesting to me. It was the least stressful tour I've been on because everyone is so easy to deal with. The week before tour was significantly more stressful than the tour itself. It was like a vacation when we got in the van and didn't have to do anything but just play shows and drive.

Doug: Punks of the world!

Richie: It's nice to be called punk. It's been a long time.

MRR: It was interesting how some of the songs developed, with Hajji studying in Jordan. Also, how come you went with Greek lettering on your latest EP?

Hajji: I guess, part of the new 7" is because we'd all been living apart, we'd all been feeling kind of alienated, not only living in new places, but also from each other. So the songs, because they were written in so many places over such an amount of time, kind of have themes of existential angst and alienation. So we were writing it, and of course I live in England so they were having all these TV shows about what's going on with the Euro, so they were saying that Greece is exiting from the Euro and they had this report where the reporter was on the street watching all the riots going on. And as it went along it kind of struck me, that neither I, nor any of my friends had good jobs and none of us really went anywhere and none of us really had a future. So this whole idea of going through life and making money and becoming something, it just doesn't exist anymore. So it kind of tied in with all of the things that were happening around us in Europe and the feeling that we don't have a past, there's no opportunity in the present and there's not going to be a future for any of us. So really, that's kind of why it's Greek. And we'd used Latin before and not only because of what's going on the Middle East, but also because of the fascination with that part of the world. So it seemed fitting at the time, thinking about alienation and not having a future.

Doug: And with the A-side song (Ausländer), it's about the fact that a lot of us have lived in these different places. As cheesy as it sounds, it's that feeling that you can never go home again. And when I was working on the lyrics, I was thinking about all these places where I've lived, and even where I was born (New Zealand) and how despite technically coming from there, I have no real connection to that place. I was really inspired by this art piece that's at the Art Institute of Chicago, by Lawrence Weiner. It's a text piece and it has basically that same kind of the sentiment behind it; you can take something from where it came from, but you can't ever really return it, because once it goes back, it's an artifact of that thing that once was. And I feel that way. I feel that way in Portland, I feel that way in Chicago, I feel that way in Providence, I feel that way in Germany or Thailand. I feel that way in any place I've ever lived or go back to. And I think all of us share that weird disconnected feeling which sort of connects with the feeling of the political climate that Hajji was just talking about; where everything feels really unstable and your future is kind of nonexistent. And the B-side of the record is a song about how when I was a child, I lived in Louisiana and we went to this holy roller, fire and brimstone, people getting healed on stage type of church. And I was forced to talk in tongues at a young age. And that was probably the moment in my life that I though 'Oh I don't think I believe in religion, I kind of see through it." And so that was another example of feeling cheated—who knows, maybe I could have had a healthy religious experience and I don't know, asked less questions. Maybe it wouldn't have been good. But it's these things that happen that dictate your life; for me it was that, the moving, the political powers and everything that affects the future.

Hajji: It also kind of ties into religion as well. For me sometimes, Greek is so tied together with the church, traditionally, with the bible, so much of it being in Greek as well. So it's exploring these themes of alienation, but also religion at the same time. So it all kind of came together as a package.

MRR: Your lyrics seems to be both politically and personally charged. I was reading your interview in Razorcake and it sounds like you have some crazy stories that inspired some of your songs and/or lyrics. Care to share some?

Hajji: One song comes to mind that is both politically and personally charged that wasn't covered in the Razorcake interview. "Secret Agent" is formed from personal experiences and at the same time a study of the climate in which they were experienced. I guess a little background is in order.

I arrived in Jordan September 1st 2001 and was living with a host family. Just as I was getting over my jet lag September 11th happened, then the war in Afghanistan, and the kickoff of the second Intifada. Al-Qa'ida had finally fully stepped into the world arena. Now American's tend to think of malice they hold for the west, but the Arab world is also a target for their scorn. Jordan had for a long time been considered a middle ground and a conduit that the "west" and "east" could communicate. This was seen as capitulation and the government of Jordan became a target just as much as the Americans. There had even been a foiled Al-Qa'ida plot to

assassinate king Abdullah. Climate of fear was a worldwide infection and it was very much felt in Jordan. Random bombings sound like something that happens in Beirut but while I was there they started happening in Amman. After each bombing, which if you haven't heard one is a very disturbing thing to hear in a city and believe me I heard this one, the US Embassy would issue a statement, a warning for citizens. I saved all of these and parts of them make up the lyrics for the song. Amman is navigated by a string of traffic circles through the city and one of the bombings had happened near the second circle. I believe it was an assassination attempt on the head of the Jordanian Intelligence bureau which actually only killed random people walking down the street, mostly Iraqi refugees. From then on it was a climate of fear, every time you went outside a bombing could happen anywhere, and many more did. I had read a book, after which the song is named, Secret Agent by Joseph Conrad. It became one of the most cited books in American media after September 11th, and was the Unibomber's favorite book. This had got me thinking about the whole idea of bombings, espionage, terrorism, politics and the media. Who has the real power? The powers that be or the individual? What is freedom? Not only is the song meditating about how terrorism and the government both try to control our lives, but it is also about what it means to truly be independent. Can punk be the bomb that sets us free? Will you follow us into nothing?

MRR: I actually like the way you merge your various influences, both musical and cultural. Do you think about the evolution of punk at all?

Hajji: I think for everyone involved with the band, the music we make is all about the evolution of punk. It's a kind of discussion we are having amongst ourselves. How do you stay the same but change. Obviously punk has mutated its own sub genres so why not incorporate more influences from art, to life, to literature and personal experience. Already it was music pulling from situationist ideas. Why not more?

Doug: Sometimes I think that the way punk has evolved reflects the way leftist politics have changed over time. Art historian T.J. Clark wrote a really great essay this year called "For a Left with No Future" which mulls over the current state of the political left. Essentially, punk (much like the left) has held on to its beliefs but lost the idealism it once had. I think that trend is why bands like the Wipers and Joy Division have become more popular over the last decade.

Zach: Punk has evolved?! Shhhh, don't tell Keith.

MRR: So, Estranged...who is The Subliminal Man?

Mark: The Subliminal Man is a short Story by JG Ballard. It's kind of about, like the idea of Big Brother, and subliminal messages and things. And I feel like I could kind of relate to it. And we happened to find a silhouette and we've used that. And we were just kind of like, we have a song called Subliminal Man, that's a man [laughs] so—might as well put two and two together, and we got ourselves a record,

MRR: You play a particularly dark and grave postpunk...are you at all depressed by the way things are in the world today?

Keith: The world is a depressing place, all you can do is make the most of it and find the things that help you get through each day. I think music whether it's playing shows, writing songs with your friends, touring or just listening to something is one of the best ways to distract yourselves from how depressing things actually are.

Mark: Yes.

Derek: I wouldn't say I'm depressed by any means. I really have become numb to all the fucked up shit that's happening in the world. I'm really trying not to pay attention to it. It might not be the right way of dealing with it but it works for me at this point in time.

MRR: And how about Portland? It's pretty famous among punks worldwide. You've been a part of it for many years. How do you feel about it?

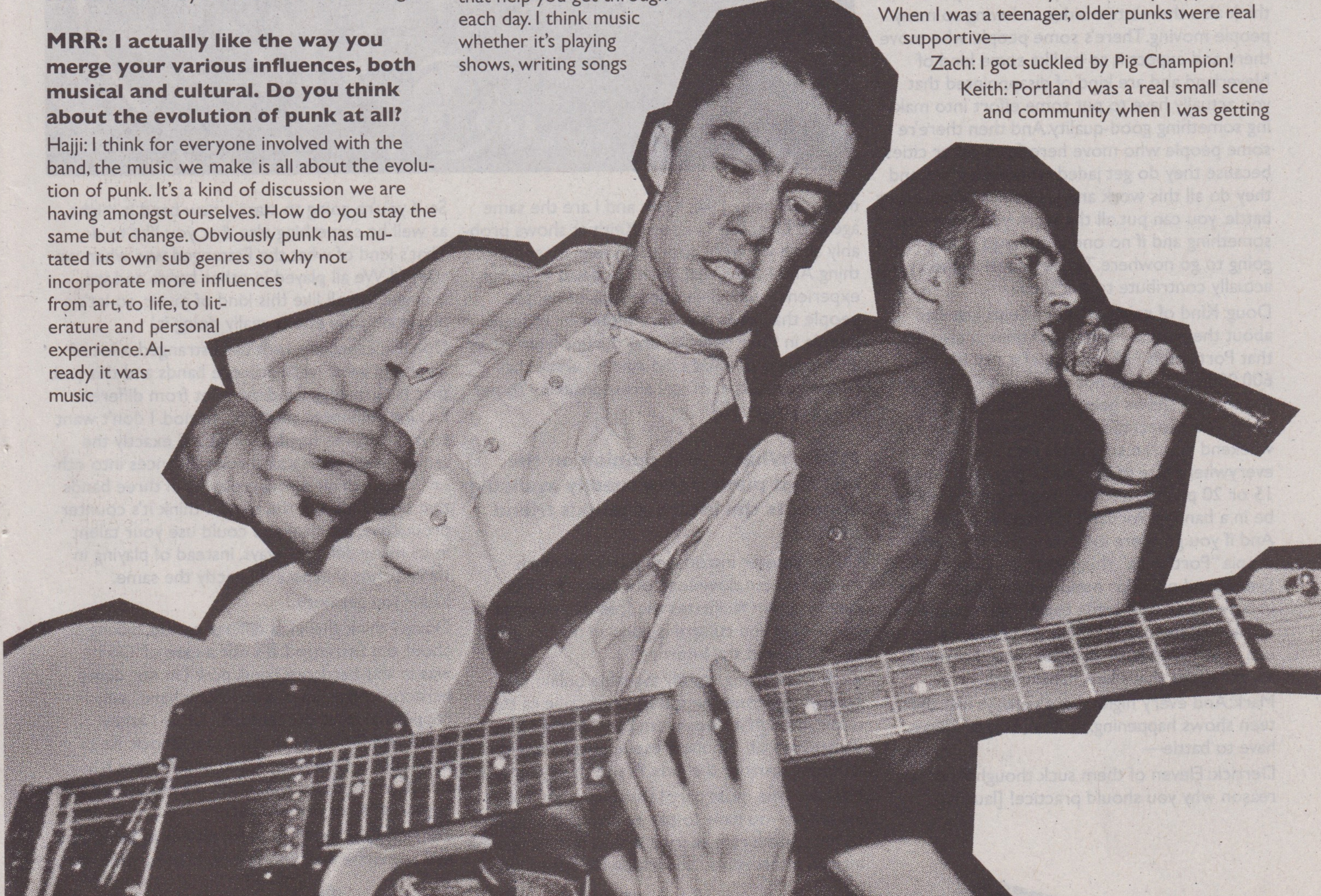
Keith: I think the biggest difference in Portland is that it embraces the younger generations, and it keeps going that way.

Derrick: It's like a culture; that gets passed down.

Keith: In other cities, you kind of feel the generation gaps more, like the older punks get jaded and don't really like the up-and-coming people, they don't support their scene. And that's basically what kills scenes in huge cities where there's millions of people, and you're like, 'Why the hell isn't there awesome communities and punk scenes in these big cities?' It's because everyone's selfish and looks out for themselves and doesn't support, doesn't see the big picture. These kids who are coming up are basically what the next generation is, creating a scene. Portland's always been really supportive. When I was a teenager, older punks were real supportive—

Zach: I got suckled by Pig Champion!

Keith: Portland was a real small scene and community when I was getting



into the scene as a teenager. A lot of people moved there, but there's still a core group of people that are putting more into it than they're taking out of it. And I think that's key.

Derrick: And I think that most of us who did move there moved there because there was something lacking in our own city, because we were getting older and it's shitty to grow up in other places where you just start turning into some jaded bar rock person. And there isn't any sort of scene anymore, and no one does care about each other's bands. And so you basically want to go to some Neverland where you don't have to grow up and you can be a punk rocker forever.

Doug: And something that I've observed for years, being there, is that Portland's always been a place that people move to. So, one year there might be a bunch of cool kids who have a bunch of cool bands, and then two years later it's like, oh a bunch of people just moved from Denver to Portland and a bunch of people moved here from Bellingham and Idaho. It's a good place for new blood to come in, that kind of like challenges everybody and encourages everybody. It's a good environment that way.

Mark: And I also think it has expectations. When you have a band in Portland it's not like you just play a show. People are like, what are you going to do next? Are you going on tour, are you going to put out a record?

Keith: Your peers are really critical of you— I think also there's two sides to having so many people moving. There's some people who move there and expect it to be like some kind of Neverland and are kind of disappointed that you actually have to put some effort into making something good-quality. And then there're some people who move here from other cities because they do get jaded where they are, and they do all this work and it's kind of like a losing battle, you can put all the work you want into something and if no one is going to help you, it's going to go nowhere. Those people move in and actually contribute to the scene.

Doug: Kind of going off what Keith just said about the people moving in, I think it also helps that Portland is not that big of a city. It's what, 600,000 people? It's not very big. So I think that the smaller shows help keep rock star attitudes and expectations at a minimum. On any weekend you can see bands that are popular everywhere else in the world play in front of 15 or 20 people. It's humbling in a good way to be in a band in Portland. It keeps you grounded. And if you go there expecting that it's this utopia "Portlandia" thing you'll be disappointed. Every band plays for nobody, every band plays in basements. And some bands are received well outside of town, but I think it's because they are use to working hard to meet those Portland expectations that Mark mentioned.

Mark: And every night there's always like thirteen shows happening, at least, so you always have to battle—

Derrick: Eleven of them suck though. Another reason why you should practice! [laughs]

MRR: I find older punks feeling jaded and complaining about new punks is completely counter-productive.

Keith: Everyone knows that attitude that things were better in the past, so there's nothing good new. Yeah, if you've enjoyed things in the past, why wouldn't you want to keep that going? Instead of just thinking 'Oh things used to be awesome, things are never going to be that good.'

MRR: There is often the opposite, when some people end up doing all of the work and eventually get bitter, or just burned out.

Mark: Yeah, I feel like I've seen so many towns on tour and it will be a really cool place to play for three years, and then you realize 'Oh the person who did everything had to stop, and now there's no one else.' So now, Medford is not as fun to play anymore.

Doug: Talking about that encouragement, I definitely feel lucky. Like, Keith and I are the same age and I feel like I've seen Keith at shows probably since we were about fourteen or something. And I think that both of us had a similar experience with different groups of people, people that when we were fifteen or sixteen, people in their twenties and thirties were really encouraging of what I did. And so when that happens, you kind of feel a responsibility to pay it back, you know?

MRR: What's your opinion on the fact that punk is now readily available online? Is the internet punk's friend or foe?

Doug: Napster introduced me to so much music. You can download our music for free. Anything that facilitates the free exchange of knowledge and culture is good in my book. Are people against the internet?

Zach: Punk being readily available online has greatly improved the quality and scope of the music, though it does seem to inspire a Miley Cyrus/Hannah Montana-esque personality crisis amongst many of the kids. Praise the cybergod!

Hajji: For the most part I think its great. No longer do you have to pay an arm and a leg just to hear some rare record. It is also making punk into an interconnected worldwide scene rather than little pockets.

Mark: We wouldn't have been able to do this interview if it weren't for the internet; so I think that is probably a good thing.

MRR: You've all been in many bands before, generally a little harsher than the bands you're in now. On the personal level, then combined on the group level, did you evolve into this? Or was it, like for many, a conscious case of 'I can't play hardcore anymore, I need something a little more chilled'?

Keith: I think we all listen to a wide spectrum of punk, hardcore, metal, or whatever. I think the reason the bands we have now sound different, is because it would be pointless to just start a new band and play exactly the same thing. So if you're going to start a new band it might as well be something else that you like to do. That's kind of what the Estranged was when we started. We all played in other bands and we thought, 'we all like this kind of music, so let's play it, nobody else is really doing it.'

Derrick: Especially with the Estranged, a lot of us play in whatever hardcore bands and this and that. It's just that we draw a lot from different fucking influences, musically, period. I don't want to play in three bands that sound exactly the same, I want to use all those influences into other things. I think if you're playing in three bands that sound kind of the same, I think it's counter productive, because you could use your talent in so many different ways, instead of playing in three bands that sound exactly the same.

Keith: You get bored.

Doug: I think there's a difference too, talking about the Estranged. It's not a case of 'Oh I was in this hardcore band, now I'm not doing hardcore, now I'm in a postpunk band,' which happens in a lot of scenes. As far as I know, Keith and Derrick are still in Hellshock. Keith is still doing Lebenden Toten and Warcry. It's not that "I'm done with that", it's more that I'm exploring all of my interests.

Derrick: Last night we were playing in San Diego and someone was yelling Nightmares, while the

Estranged was playing. Are you fucking kidding me?

Doug: And the Estranged played Nightmares, and killed it. [laughs]

Keith: I was going to say, about the different styles of music thing, what Doug was saying. So, we used to play hardcore, but we still listen to that stuff and all the bands. As far as one of the reasons the scene in Portland is strong, is because we'll play with metal bands or hardcore bands or whatever. You don't just pick a specific scene and say we can only play with this kind of band. So it's not as divided. Obviously there's still going to be small divisions and groups and other scenes.

Derrick: But, the Estranged played with Tragedy a few months back and it was great. We had a blast.

Keith: There was like a stoner rock band, too.

Hajji: I think part of it is just growing up and finding your voice. It isn't necessarily confined to style or genre. It's just trying to express yourself and figuring out what you like. And it can range across everything.

Doug: I think at one of the first Red Dons shows, at Ground Control, I believe Walls opened up, then we played, and then Clorox Girls and Warcry. And that makes sense in Portland. All those bands—there's a common thread. And I think that's why you can't get too tripped up about the kind of punk or whatever.

Zach: Well, you are all in the same fantasy football league [laughs]

Derrick: Going with what Doug just said, our first or second show was with Tragedy. And the show was fucking great, it was awesome. The Portland scene is such a close-knit community where we can do that and no ones' going to bat an eye or an ear to that. People enjoyed it and that's kind of how Portland has become. It seems like it's getting younger and younger. There're all these younger bands coming about that I don't know. I have to go into Blackwater and ask Keith about certain bands and shit. And some of the youngest part of the scene, those are some of the best bands in Portland right now. It's pretty incredible what that city is capable of.

Doug: Portland's cool too as far as the genre stuff, because I always think about that, there's not a specific Portland sound, you know? Maybe people used to sort of think about Portland as having a "sound". But this is the town that's produced the Wipers and Poison Idea, but also Tragedy and the Exploding Hearts. You can just go on and on with that list. All those bands are quintessential Portland bands and sound very Portland but they don't sound similar. I came back to Portland the other day and I saw Bimarks for the first time and they're a thrash band basically, but amazing—the show blew me away, it was like, this band rules, you know?

Richie: The Walls / Red Dons / Clorox Girls / Warcry show that was referenced earlier, is a great example—I went to that show, I hardly knew anyone except Doug and Daniel, and I wasn't very familiar with any of the bands either. But in retrospect, I thought, "Holy shit! What a great show!" All different, but all great bands. A lot of kids go to those shows and they're able to cross over and appreciate the different approaches and styles. Like Doug going to the Bi-marks show and thinking how crazy and amazing it was, even though I know Doug doesn't really gravitate towards thrash bands. My point is, it's great to see that people are trying to do something different, and also that it's encouraged and enjoyed by the people who go to those shows.

Hajji: We've been going to shows every day. I get off the airplane and it's the Longknife show.

Doug: And never even got to see Longknife. Sounds amazing though.

Derrick: And they're like the biggest thing since Franz Bread or something, heard they're very credible.

Doug: Some Germans told me about them, I didn't even know who they were. I'm sorry, some Bavarians. [said with accent / laughs]

Hajji: There was a Clorox Girls show, but there was something else. The Summer Bummer and then the Range Rats, and we saw the other Youthbitch show.

Doug: And then there're the bands that are touring. I landed in Portland and we went to the Timbers game and then directly from that we went to Range Rats then the next night was Neon Piss at one show and Bimarks at another. Portland is a place where you have to make a decision, 'I want to see Neon Piss, so I'm going to have miss Mean Jeans who are playing across town.

Richie: So you'd miss Mean Jeans for Neon Piss, is that what you're saying?

Doug: I'd never seen Neon Piss and they were on tour. That's the decision I made Richie, and I'm standing by it.' [laughs]

MRR: What do you all do when you're not playing with the band? What's your life like?

Hajji: I have a mastering studio where I mix and master records for DIY punk bands called the North London Bomb Factory. Once again following the Secret Agent theme, the studio is named after a news headline about a foiled plot in east London where a small group was manufacturing bombs for a planed terror attack. I also play in Thee Spivs, the Role Models and work part time in a pub.

Doug: I am finishing up grad school at the Rhode Island School of Design. I study painting. I also collaborate with friends on a music project in Chicago called Endless Column and another music project with a friend in Boston.

Zach: I work for a non-profit and play in a far more juvenile band called Piss Test.

Keith: I help run a record store called Black Water, as well as a label. The store also serves as a recording studio, rehearsal space for about 20+ bands and some artist spaces among other things. I'm still trying to figure out how to play in five other bands and work to other jobs and do the record label…

Mark: Well, I'm a house painter and I teach guitar to kids in middle schools and high schools as well.

Derek: Work. Work. Work. Sounds fun, huh?

MRR: In the face of global destruction (or a zombie apocalypse), how significant is human life? Is the glass half empty?

Hajji: Funny, I have nightmares about the apocalypse at least once a week.

Zach: I love to act the misanthropist, but I work in social services, so that must mean something.

Mark: I think that human life is significant but it depends on the type of global destruction. For example if we were dealing with the zombie apocalypse, I think our fate as humans would be pretty bleak. I don't even think that the idea of human life would even be relevant at that point. In every zombie movie I've seen the zombies always win in the end.

MRR: What would you like played at your funeral? And if you could bring back one dead musician, who would it be?

Zach: Charlie Feathers at my funeral, and Sam Cooke. Not the most punk answers.

Doug: Can they be zombie versions?

Richie: I'd hire the singer of Amon Amarth to kill the zombies! [laughs]

Hajji: There's a piece by Bach called Crossing the River Jordan that I'd like to have, and the person, probably Bach.

Keith: This'd probably change everyday, but right now it'd be Manowar, just because we've been listening to it. Oh, uh, Keith Moon would be pretty sweet to bring back.

Mark: For my funeral, I think I'd like some western music or something. Some Ennio Morricone soundtrack or something. And, who would I bring back? I'll have to come back to that.

Derrick: I'm going to let you all down. At my funeral it'd have to be Neil Young, "One of These Days". Which, nobody in this room knows that fucking song; you know, just think about your friends. Who would I bring back to life to see…? George Carlin!

Zach: I'm going to go the comedic route on who I'd bring back. For my funeral, it'd be the song "Our Mother the Mountain" from Townes van Zandt. And I'd bring back Mitch Hedberg.

Doug: I think I'd like to bring back Patrick Swayze so he could do a sequel to Roadhouse, and rip out someone's throat again.

MRR: The world is ending in December. What is on your bucket list?

Hajji: Tour!

Doug: Yes, another tour!

Keith: Sleep.

MRR: Anything last you'd like to say?

Derrick: (growls in Eddie voice) This is the Estranged and Red Dons. [laughs]

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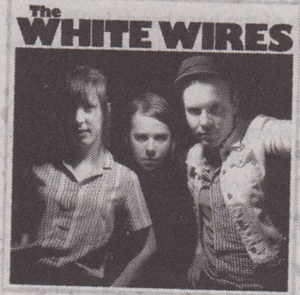

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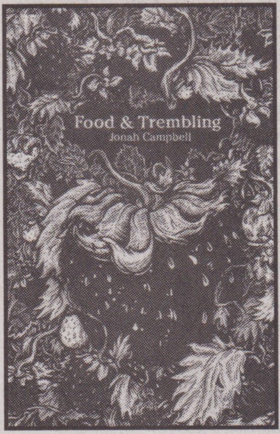


Food & Trembling
Jonah Campbell
216 pages • $16.95
Invisible Press
www.invisiblepublishing.com

I thought about petitioning *MRR* to start a blog review section. It would be on our website, and it would be appropriate for projects like this book. I think the main difference between blogging and regular writing is that when you are blogging pretty much nobody holds you to the standards of actual grammar. You can write as you speak, candidly and perhaps without editing, and "it's okay." I personally feel open disdain for this potentially rambling consciousness-streaming to end up on a page of paper, but of course it could always be far worse, and this specimen of non-complete-sentence-having is among the finer examples of the form. A sub-difference is that you are probably expected to read the short bursts in separate moments, one at a time, with a break in between—so none of it has to be connected or related and you can open it and begin reading anywhere. Readers of Jonah Campbell's literary punk food blog, Still Crapulent After All These Years (on Wordpress), will be stoked to find his collection of tiny essays that are as much about words and etymology as about gastronomical adventures *all in one place*, that is, you don't have to bring your computer to the water closet with you. The authorial tone is lilting, pontificating, meandering, and equally somewhat self-aggrandizing as it is deprecating. Mr. Campbell is serious about analyzing whatever happens in his mouth, and I appreciate his vocabulary as much as his ability to tie topics together. Blogging tone aside, this here is quite a writer and a thinker.

The way to read this book is by perusing the index. It actually has an index. For example, start anywhere but end with Levis-Strauss, Claude, New Year's, cannibalism, hamburger helper, soy products, KFC: skin thereof, and *The Terminator*. I think this guy is funny. I read somewhere that this collection all first appeared online but is "expanded" and "revised" from its former incantation and loosely strung in the order of the tummy—it gets ever-wider, spiraling and curved! I almost feel culturally illiterate trying to understand most of the references he makes.

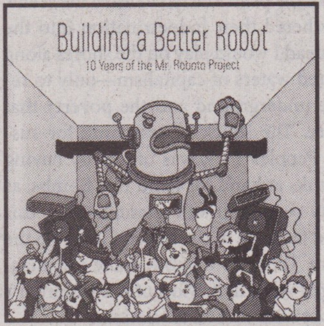
I felt thoughtful during the essay titled "Food As Destroyer", in which Mr. Campbell finds a way to talk about the painful results of eating to excess from "the side" as opposed to "head on", where he covers what you want when you are sick, and how that can make you sicker. In his case this is beyond comfort food, such as tomato soup with olive oil, oregano, cayenne and garlic accompanied by an accidental overdose of toast, so as to instead of becoming sated become "so hideously gorged that my body has to divert all its energies into digesting the oily glue heap in my stomach instead of repairing/repelling whatever illness I should be battling." Haven't we all been there?

Also particularly psychically elucidating is the piece on The Fear, and the difference between the Physical Hangover, the Metaphysical Hangover, and the Sublime Hangover, as inspired by something Kingsley Amis wrote. Here he regales the sitting "just shy of loathing-distance away from someone similarly be feared to watch something inoffensive," and begins to drift into the annals of an alcohol-soaked brain logic—but comes out analyzing a particularly appeasing chickpea sandwich.

He recants his "petty bigotries" which I feel wounded to proclaim is a nice way of saying he was once a vegan asshole, in his essay on the origins of tomatoes and clams together; in which a perfect (for him) example is the Gin Caesar: "For years Clamato juice seemed to me the apogee of gastronomic impropriety—in exactly the vein of moralizing opprobrium that I have elsewhere disavowed, I decried it as not only patently gross, but in some way 'just plain wrong.' A phrase that is in company with patriotism and the *reductio ad Hitlerum* as the last refuges of the scoundrel and/or buffoon." He goes on to merit the nutrient-rich origin of the perfect drink with spaghetti alle vongole, an Italian dish of noodles and clams, apparently, and this isn't the least pretentious moment you will find in these pages.

My favorite example of *that* phenomenon is in the essay "Never Again: is What You Swore, the Time Before," with the use of the not-fake word grotesquerie, used to describe the incidence of the Reese's BizarroCup, where the peanut butter was on the outside and the chocolate was filler. It takes you to a place of reckoning, where you might feel put upon by the indulgence of his tone, but then you have to keep reading because he has hooked you. How he can remark upon the grams of chocolaty-peanutness and ratio of sweet to savory, at such length, the joke is on me as I continue to turn the page.

—Julia Booze



Building a Better Robot: 10 Years of the Mr. Roboto Project
Text by Andy Mulkerin; created by Andy Mulkerin, Mike Q. Roth and Missy Wright, with Dan Bidwa and Arthur Daniel Allen
192 pages • $20
University of Roboto Press
5106 Penn Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
www.therobotoproject.org

Pittsburgh is an awesome, underrated city with its own character, and the Mr. Roboto Project is the DIY, all ages, cooperatively run venue that's been operating in neighboring Wilkinsburg, PA for almost twelve years now, and recently moved to a new, better space in Pittsburgh proper. For being on par with (and specifically modeled after) 924 Gilman St. and ABC No Rio as far as prolific all-ages venues in the 2000s go, I've never been sure how well-known Roboto has been outside of the East Coast and possibly the Midwest, and so aside from wanting to read more about its history and inner workings, I hope that this book will inform and inspire others as well.

The first third of the book discusses how the space came to be, including working within the existing parameters, its interactions and cooperation with other community entities ranging from a landlord who served on the Chamber of Commerce to an infoshop with which Roboto grew in tandem, as well as the story of getting the spot physically ready for the first show, a brief transition to a different spot, and a bit on how the collective's explicit desire to run a venue free of substance use and racism, sexism, and homophobia worked in practice.

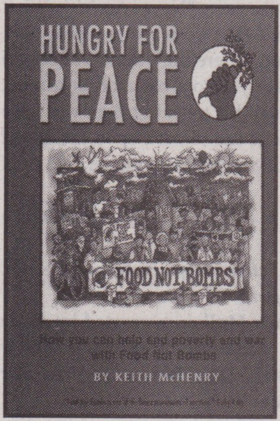
The writing is level-headed and takes different factors and points of view into account, while clearly still being proud of what's been accomplished. Four page-length testimonials of people involved with Roboto follow the initial story—three positive, one more negative—and then, the book is essentially a photobook for its second two thirds, interspersed with various stories of specific shows and individuals' experiences with the venue. The photos are in chronological order, and it's interesting to see the popularity of various waves of music play out over the course of the decade, although the venue seems to pride itself on its eclecticism and turning patrons of one style of music on to other styles. I'd heard stories about Roboto shows in the early 2000s with their "thrash pyramids" and iced tea-drinking contests (and wishing that shows in my own town were half as wild) and it was fun to finally see some of it in picture and story form. The photos all do a fantastic job of capturing the energy and enthusiasm of the bands and crowds, who often seem like they're having the time of their lives going off to the bands (I made it to a few Roboto shows when I lived on the East Coast, and every single one was a blast, whether an all-local bill or several well-known touring bands).

The book also includes flyer collages on a few pages, the majority of which show a great deal of creativity and attention to detail, and a list of almost all the collective's shows makes up the book's final few pages. The included DVD/CD

also includes this show list, along with some decent live footage and 37 songs by Roboto mainstays that span the venue's history.

While I think this book serves as an excellent visual history and a decent loose model for folks wishing to start similar spaces in their own cities, I'm left feeling like the coverage is a bit too cursory, and would've been interested to read more about Roboto's middle years, and more on the inner workings, conflicts, and challenges that the collective faced once it was more established. It's abundantly clear from the testimonials that the space played a major part in individuals' moving to or staying in Pittsburgh, but I feel like a wider range of perspectives might've added to the book (I thought the Gilman book did a good job of this, although it definitely has a over a decade of extra history to draw from). Overall however, it's a great read, and I wish them the best of luck in their new space.

— Dan Goetz



Hungry For Peace: How You Can Help End Poverty with Food Not Bombs
Keith McHenry
180 pages • $18.95
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My life has been changed as much by Food Not Bombs as it was with the Gilman St. Project. By 1992 most of my peers started to leave the scene, as they furthered their indoctrination into the system. Instead I would play on the shores along the corrupted waters of capitalism—only to return to the underground and the poverty that festers there. The shock of searching for sustenance at People's Park was off-set by having random punks at hand for Food Not Bombs, as much as the crazies and the destitute. Twenty years later still unemployable, this book came as a good compass to see if I'm too far gone in the forest. I imagine the book having a different effect for most others. Those who know of the organization in passing will probably not see anything of value in it. Most of it is yesterday's news. While those new to activism, will be met with several revelations.

Hungry For Peace walks the reader by the hand through paint-by-numbers DIY. The first section is sixteen pages that explain Food Not Bombs—the who, what, why of it all. The history and theory shouldn't really startle anybody as it strives to suggest not to employ violence or anything to jeopardize a popular front. And for good reason: author Keith McHenry and many members of Food Not Bombs have been met with ugly repression over the years. The practical necessity to feed the hungry being more important than following the current brand of what's "radical." The tone remains cheerful, even through the tour of atrocities, as the book makes its case for people to invest in these kinds of direct action tactics.

There were times though when I really felt I was reading the transcripts to an infomercial, but oh well. This really comes to play in the second section with its 50 pages that aim to explain it all. From forming your own local chapter, to setting up protests and benefit concerts. Reading it wasn't all that bad even though the writing reminded me at times of the terrain of activist schoolwork. Yet I soon started to be inspired to act in small ways to make a difference—throw a benefit show…perhaps. In this regard the book does pose some danger worthy of the ire of lowlifes like the FBI. The methodical passages that detail the steps to engage in some kind of resistance demystifies the gall it takes to really face off the state. After being harassed and arrested for simply sharing food, people lose the respect and fear for the ways of authorities we're all conditioned with. The third section of the book documents the history of FNB, including state repression of various Food Not Bombs organizers. I found this section informative even though I tend to keep up on these events.

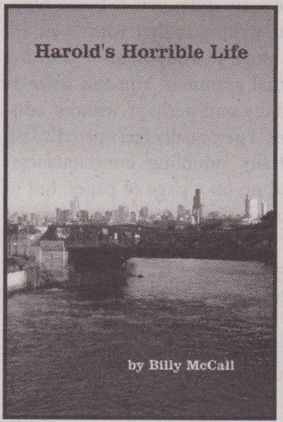
To cool off from the heat there is over twenty pages of recipes (each one charted for 6 people to 100). They keep the menu to vegan dishes done with the intent of being mouth-watering. They address the essentials of breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert. The recipes will probably give this book its most return visits, but the book is also peppered with random photos of people doing Food Not Bombs and sister-acts of protest that are of some interest.

Hungry for Peace is seemingly a one-man show. But that is the price we pay for not doing the work and relying on leaders (who will be shortsighted and hindered by ego). If the book had been made by a collective it would have a more unidentifiable consciousness—as well as less embarrassing typos and lapses of logic. As it is, this pretty much shows McHenry's place in the world. He is a baby boomer activist with the knowledge and trappings of "New Left" politics (Marxist, Anarchist). One would think that for a movement that has had so many people involved at one time or the other, more perspectives could have made it into the book. After all, the last stages of the New Left in the early '70s had many group-written pieces that have an intelligence and roundness lacking ever since.

In reading this there are some traces of looking into the uncharted territory of the future that is necessary to take on tomorrow. McHenry's book does have a unique character in that it melds the attitudes of the healthy foods movement with that of street protesters. But does it speak to present day punks? Does anything?

Food Not Bombs has been an important factor for many people walking away from the death machine and becoming radicalized. Take for example how forest and animal defenders have learned their chops in such spaces. Anti-globalization freaks and identity politics insurgents learned to take on the world thanks in no small part to the influence of FNB. Most recently Food Not Bombs has helped people understand the consensus decision-making process for small groups, which has "Occupied" many Americans this past year. More importantly, in a culture that ensures atomization and a worship of institutional toxins, people have continually come to FNB to find a way back to community and health. This book continues that tradition, even if we don't.

—Robert Eggplant



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The title sounds like a Maurice Sendak children's book, but the plot is squarely *Children of the Corn*. There is nothing G-rated, polite or subtle this self-published novel by author, filmmaker, zinester, and band member Billy McCall. Currently in New Mexico, McCall has managed to combine the fastidious inventory of *American Psycho's* serial killer protagonist with the overwhelming feel of doom and degradation and death of Charles Romalotti's indie horror trilogy, *Pariah*.

First a note about the format: this book was published through what used to be called a vanity press (a company that prints a book upon being paid by the author, with little or no editorial involvement by the publisher). That used to mean that the author wasn't "good enough" to be signed to a "real" publisher.

As music has adapted to new technology, so has literature. The self-publishing world isn't as stigmatized as it once was, in part because some of the books have been optioned for larger projects (example: Michael Knight's *Taqwacores* novel was turned into two films—one a documentary, the other a theatrical version of the book). Many very talented writers have been moving to digital and self-publishing channels as the major publishers have become more risk-adverse. Additionally, some moderately successful authors have chosen to release their recent books themselves digitally and physically, much like former major-label bands like Public Enemy and Prince choosing to go mostly or completely independent. As a voracious reader and book reviewer, I've been learning to give vanity press editions a chance because it's no longer clear why a book is on a vanity press.

Harold's Horrible Life is also McCall's first novel. I've reviewed a lot of first novels for *Maximum Rocknroll* and let me tell you, it can be a real crapshoot! Sometimes the first novels are better off unpublished, while other times they sparkle with the tint of real talent. McCall's book is the latter—it's an excellent, well-written, gripping horror novel that sinks its teeth into the reader's brain and doesn't let go until the very end.

Without going too far into the plot (no spoilers!), Harold is your garden-variety sociopath who decides to kill a co-worker. Why? Because he is bored and searching for meaning in his life. From there, the plot progresses, with multiple layers of characters toying with each other like cats and mice. There is redemption and self-realization; love and hate. The plot is full of ironic turnabouts and sex and gore—*a lot* of gore.

This is torture porn for the literary set. If you can't stand the blood and gore in Lucio Fulci's "Zombi" films or Bret Easton Ellis's "American Psycho" novel, don't bother picking up this book. For the rest of us, this is a fascinating slice (heh) of sociopathic horror.

— Jesse Luscious

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

EVERYTHING'S SO NICE AND PRETTY

The choice of one word for the film title gives as much insight into the band as the whole documentary ever could. "Days, "time", "life" or any of those kinds of generic ways of describing something you did for a period of time could have easily been used in its place. Yet, selecting "career" really sets the tone for **Circle Jerks: My Career As A Jerk.** When did it go from being the excitement and exhilaration of being in a punk band to the rather boring idea of a vocation? Or did that early fun ever really exist? It is time to find out.

Quite honestly I was not looking forward to ninety-six minutes of Keith Morris rambling in his Southern California surfer drawl about what it was like to be in a punk band. It is probably not fair to immediately assume that is what the film was going to be. However I have seen Morris appear in other punk documentaries and my assumption ended being correct. The majority of the film is present day talking heads telling the story of Circle Jerks. There are interviews with most of the members of the Circle Jerks including original members Morris, Greg Hetson and Lucky Lehrer and those who joined later Zander Schloss, Earl Liberty and Keith Clark. There are also brief interviews with other punk luminaries such as Henry Rollins, J. Mascis and Lisa Fancher. The interviews are interspersed with live footage of the band performing from 1980 to 2009.

Circle Jerks was formed by ex-Black Flag singer Keith Morris and ex-Red Cross guitarist Greg Hetson. Hetson befriended drummer Lucky Lehrer whom he tried to get to replace Ron Reyes as the drummer of Red Cross. That didn't work out so when Hetson left Red Cross he recruited Lehrer for his new band. Roger Rogerson was added on bass. Circle Jerks would routinely replace the rhythm section throughout its existence.

One of the insights into the Circle Jerks is their approach to songwriting. It seems to be rather difficult for them. When they formed Morris admits to saying to the other guys in the band, "All of you have played in other bands. Have you written any songs? Have you written any music while you were in any of these bands that we can use in this band?" Followed with "[That] created a very tense situation because there were a lot of disgruntled bands that were accusing us of stealing their songs." As well as "At that time I felt a bit of desperation." The songwriting problem follows the Circle Jerks throughout the years.

By the fourth album Wonderful Morris laments that the songs were written by newcomers Schloss and Clark. Even when they finally signed to a major label in 1995 for album number six *Oddities, Abnormalities and Curiosities*, the song they chose for their single was a cover of the Soft Boys "I Wanna Destroy You". The band's most recent break up in 2009 was caused by album producer Dimitri Coats writing songs for the band. When Circle Jerks eventually fired him, Morris left with him and they started the band Off!

Listening to Morris discuss Circle Jerks I have to question his motivation for being in a punk band in the first place. In hindsight it seems like it was nothing but a hassle. It seems like they were going through the motions. However I am impressed with the level of honesty presented in **Circle Jerks: My Career As A Jerk**. No one comes across as particularly likable. In many instances I wonder why I liked this band in the first place. Yet, the band whether they are aware of what they are doing or not, seems to be presenting the unaltered truth. That is the least a viewer could expect from a documentary.

Watching **Circle Jerks: My Career As A Jerk** may give you too much insight into the band. Maybe we don't need to know every detail about the births and downfalls of the original punk bands. We could be left in the dark to some of the realities. The songs and the album covers may be all the truth we need to know. Let our imaginations fill in the rest. Now it won't be possible for me to go back to thinking "World Up My Ass" is just a fun, obnoxious song. Instead I may picture Schloss talking about protecting the legacy of Circle Jerks and getting annoyed because it's not really his legacy to worry about.

The early live footage is main reason to watch **Circle Jerks: My Career As A Jerk**. Included are clips from **The Decline of Western Civilization**, a show from the Cuckoo's Nest in 1980 and great black and white footage for a performance of "Back Against the Wall". There is also lots of later period stuff including the late '80s metal years, Debbie Gibson singing back up on "I Wanna Destroy You" at CBGB in 1995, the somewhat tame video for the same song and a 2009 show in Chile.

The **Circle Jerks: My Career As A Jerk** DVD also includes a few deleted scenes. The best is full interview with Rollins where he talks about meeting Morris at Target video and getting introduced to slam dancing by the Southern California punks in San Francisco. It is one of the better bits and should have been included in the film. www.wvdvisual.com

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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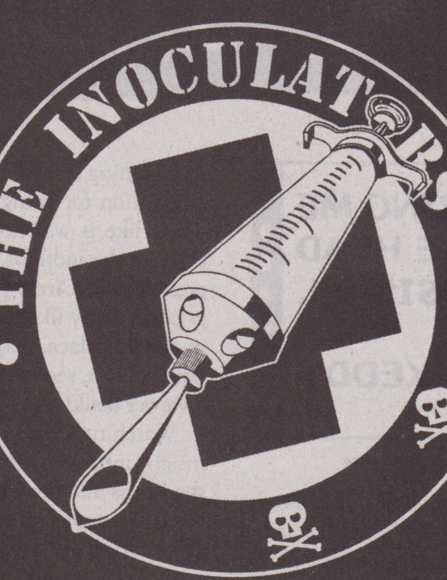

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ACTIVE MINDS – "Turn Back the Tide of Bigotry" LP
This is another one of those bands whose records I have seen around for 20 years or more but have never heard. The first thing that really struck me about this record is that they've been a band for so long, but their musicianship is kinda bad. Like their drummer can barely hold the beat most of the time. This is punk though, right? They toe the line between anarcho-punk and D-beat, sticking to fast tempos and sung/yelled vocals. Their songs are rather in-depth, covering patriotism, homophobia, nuclear power and consumerism at more than just a topical level. There's a full-size booklet included with lyrics and explanations. All this may be awesome for longtime fans, but I'm having a hard time remaining interested. (GH)
(Looney Tunes / Maloka / Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

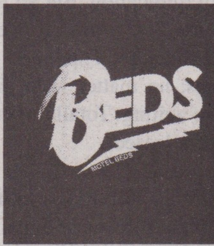
ADELIT@S – "Llama Viva de la Rabia" LP
I don't know what happened to ADELITAS since the last time I saw them, but they are light years better now. This record rips! They play super tight, aggressive hardcore sung in Spanish with female and male vocals, usually spitting out rapid-fire lyrics in unison. There is a definite Latin American influence in the songwriting with some of the songs focusing on immigration struggles, gentrification and the fucked up (and racist) laws of Arizona. This album took me by surprise in the best way and I suggest that you get it and let it do the same for you. (GH)
(Aborted Society)

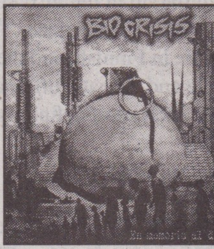
ANGER BURNING – "When" LP
Swedish raw tunes with a *Why?*-era DISCHARGE backbone. Even their name is a nod to DISCHARGE. Long-play format is perfect for this release, but it still leaves you hungry for more. Good thing both sides are solid, as you can flip this record over and over for hours. Solid D-beat carries this record through with noisy guitar wails, strong bass and confrontational vocals. Must be chaos times to see ANGER BURNING live. (AE)
(Rawmantic Disasters / Trummer Pogo)

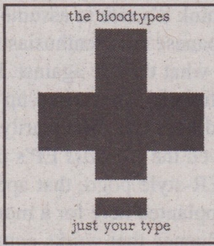
DIE ANGST – CD
What a surprise! I had no idea what to expect from this CD—but boy did I score some excellent dark punk from Germany! Think demo-era COMPLICATIONS blended with other great bleak German punk like later CHAOS Z and EA80. But let's not write this off as a tribute band or anything, because there is enough originality on this CD for it to stand out on its own. The vocals on the first song are really rough and throaty, which freaked me out a little, but it never happens again, making it kinda special and purposeful. Like, "Listen up! *Achtung*! I'm fucking serious, pay attention to this album 'cause it's gonna get you moving!" The vocal variety throughout the rest of the CD is incredible and dynamic—so rare! The German language really harshens up these deathrock-esque compositions and creates a tense, but constantly moving (danceable!) sound. Oh shit, now I'm on track four and there's a whispering part that's so *gooood*…and these flange-y guitar lines tickle me just right, just draped over the thick and plodding bass and drums. All I gotta say is if you like the aforementioned bands, or if you like to light a bunch of candles and drink red wine and dance around your bedroom in the dark, you should really track this down. So fucking awesome. Where's the fucking vinyl!? (MA)
(Moon)

ANTI-SOCIALES – "Las Menos Macabras de las Vidas" LP
Way back around 1985, a Spanish band named 091 put out a single titled "Fuego en Mi Officina." This record reminds me of that song, without necessarily sounding just like it. Imagine if Joe Strummer was born in Puerto Rico and not England. Now imagine he liked the BEATLES more than he liked the ROLLING STONES. Never mind. Like much punk that is sung in Spanish, this is extremely catchy. I happen to be a big fan of catchy, so I lap this sort of thing up. Excellent. (KK)
(Plan It X)

APOCALYPSE MEOW / THE DIMARCOS – split LP
I like melodic punk with gruff vocals. I love that second AMERICAN STEEL LP. The DIMARCOS side is melodic punk with gruff vocals about the requisite topics (alcohol abuse, being bummed, etc.). The riffs are basic and the chord progressions are too. For it to be this basic, it's got to be super catchy or super tight—and unfortunately it's not. The APOCALPSE MEOW side is like a mellower, poppier TOYS THAT KILL, but I could also see these guys being into SMALLTOWN, the SORE THUMBS, or the STATUES based on the clean guitar tone and song structures. The way the choppy guitar interplays with the straight-ahead toms is a straight-up nod to TOYS THAT KILL. This side is







catchy, fun to listen to and the songs are well put together. Unfortunately for the DIMARCOS, this format begs for a comparison and the APOCALYPSE MEOW side is head and shoulders above the DIMARCOS'. (P$)
(Bigger Boat)

ARCTIC FLOWERS – "Procession" 12"

This is ARCTIC FLOWERS's first release since the much-acclaimed full length *Reveries* from last year. While that release generated immediate hype and excitement, it felt like this release created immediate distain and disappointment. And I don't think it's because this record is bad (I personally feel this record is quite good), but I think the change in attitude has a lot to do with expectations. And this record is not what many were expecting. In these five songs ARCTIC FLOWERS move away from the UK anarcho sound they unapologetically flaunted previously, and move toward a postpunk/deathrock hybrid. In addition to that, the vocals are sung in a very "professional" way. Maybe that's not the best word to describe the vocals, but you know what I mean. The vocals are delivered the way a trained singer would deliver them, with attention to key and harmonies. It's a style you don't experience too often in punk, and is (unfairly) viewed with trepidation. But all that aside, this is a good album. The songs are well crafted, catchy, dark and timeless. This band can create really great songs; no matter what direction they take their song writing. Totally worth tracking down. (FS)
(self-released)

ASPEX / KRUEL – split flexi

This is a really fucking good genre record. Both of these SoCal bands play D-beat-driven raw punk, a treacherous sound to aspire to, because if you can't pull it off it sounds amateurish. Luckily, both acts can write riffs and know how songs like these should be recorded. KRUEL's lone track features the standard noisy guitar tone à la CONFUSE, mixed with a vocalist who sounds like he's barking the lyrics (in Spanish) at you from the middle of a tunnel. ASPEX's one song is along the same lines, but they push everything up in the mix, so the vocals and guitars are really in your face. The lyrics to their offering are in Finnish, and there's a killer breakdown at the end. Great stuff and hearing just one track from each band definitely left me wanting more. (KM)
(Konton Crasher)

ATTACK SS – "No Nukes!!" EP

Given that their last EP was entitled *No Boss*, I think it's safe to assume that this band of crusty Japanese noise enthusiasts are very much defined by what they're against. If nothing else, they are definitely for fucked-up guitar tones, freedom and beer (not necessarily in that order). While I loved the *No Boss* EP's playful take on DISORDER-style pogo, that approach has mostly been supplanted here for a more visceral crasher crust influence that works equally well. They've kept their dual "fuzz" and "noise" guitar set-up, but the drummer breaks out of the one-two pogo box to deliver blazing CONFUSE-esque fills all over the place while Jun's snotty vocals and the frequent gang vocals keep this from straying too far into the realm of po-faced D-beat worship. The last track, "P.O.L.I.B.A.S." recalls the nutty jam on the B-side of the Zyanose Lovele SS EP and definitely takes the edge off the more metallic earlier proceedings. Top-notch noise from small town Japan. (AU)
(Distort Reality)

BARREN WOMB – "On the Origin of Faeces" 10"

An interesting record that alternates between quirky hardcore, spastic powerviolence and noisy sludgecore. Some reference points might be IRON LUNG or NEUROSIS, although at times they remind me of REFUSED. This band makes a lot of noise for a two-piece. The song titles are all puns (examples: "Mohawkwind," "Less Is Roger Moore," "My Pal Trenchfoot") that seem to have little to do with the lyrics. I love puns though. Maybe 'pun(k) rock' could be a new genre? Overall a pretty decent project, on a thick slab of orange vinyl. (AM)
(The Perfect Hoax)

BECKY LEE AND DRUNKFOOT – "Hello Black Halo" CD

This is one of those rare appearances of the one-woman band. This Arizonian has no problem keeping up with and surpassing the boys in the field. The secret to a one-person band is the riff and the voice. These riffs are catchy and LEE's voice reminds me of ALICJA TROUT. A bit heavy on the ballads, but they do sound very nice. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

THE BELUSHIS – "Shaker" LP

Man, I love John Belushi. I can't imagine in his most freebased coked-out state that he would like this generic hard rock bullshit. They got songs like "Sex Will Do." Like don't you even enjoy fucking if you're in some generic hard rock band. They got a song called "Hot Glass" that seems like it's about smoking speed, but I can't imagine wanting to listen to this bullshit no matter how high I was. I could go on and on, but just avoid this at all costs. (RO)
(self-released)

BENT WIND – "Sacred Cows/Castles Made of Man"

A-side is catchy '69 psych that calls to mind a few other bands from the era I like but I can't remember the names of, but does it matter? Anyway, the A-side is typical but tuneful with clear vocals and a pop chorus that I like. The B-side is a stoned psych-out that could benefit from higher fidelity (as could the A-side) but I'm not gonna call the BBB or anything. I like it. (BB)
(Ugly Pop)

BERSICKER / R.O.T.T.E.R. – split EP

Two new bands, BERSICKER from the UK and R.O.T.T.E.R. from the US (NYC and San Francisco). BERSICKER does a nice throwback crusty thing. This is not the canned crust of the last few years but a new take on the anarchistic sounds of crust's beginnings. R.O.T.T.E.R. is more in the rough-and-ugly punk hardcore vein. I dig the guitar playing, which is unique in that it mixes an older, almost clean single-note riff sound and a modern noisy distorted hardcore sound. Good first outing from both bands. (MH)
(Lonely Linda)

THE BEST – "Black Triangle/King of the Underground"

Is this really the first band in history to use the name the BEST? Seems obvious, but I can't think of any others. Who needs humility anyway? So yeah, some cocky little Austin brats, but, what's that? This is actually *great*. These kids did their homework; you can hear all the references (namely Detroit and Ohio), but this is the first "modern" band doing '70s punk rock I've heard in ages that sounds like good—believable—rock'n'roll, but with a unique take I haven't heard done before. Fresh. A two-sider even. Great stuff, I hope they can keep it up! (GB)
(Twistworthy)

BIO CRISIS – "En Memoria al Dolor" CD

Melodic crusty D-beat in the vein of SKITSYSTEM's first two LPs. Nothing mind-blowing here, and but it's solid and raging enough and the melody conveys emotion without being sappy. I could do without the "beautiful" interludes, but the rest of the CD is good enough that I'll let it slide. (DG)
(Culture War DIY / Detesta / Negligent / Replenish / Tomorrow Belongs to Us)

THE BLOODTYPES – "Just Your Type" CD

An energetic mix of '77 punk, garage and new wave. An excellent female singer means that one can't really help but liken this quartet to the EPOXIES. A delicate dash of keyboards only helps. Catchy, driving and that perfect "clean" punk sound. Like they've been distilling the best of the first three BUZZCOCKS albums (even including some of the "prog" bits), and trying 'em out with a spunky female chanteuse. Wouldn't be surprised if these guys and gal are the next big thing. Deservedly so. (RK)
(self-released)

BRAT FERRAR – CD

An Australian one-man band featuring an ex-member of DIGGER AND THE PUSSY CATS. This is dark, rumbling garage with self-consciously WIPERS-meets-JESUS AND MARY CHAIN guitars and driving songs about girls and records. Each song sounds like it was recorded in a different studio/basement/bedroom; it doesn't have an LP-like totality. Maybe it was recorded as an ongoing thing rather than all at once? Some

of it reminds me of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT, some JAY REATARD, some weird proto-punk shit, then a throw-away track on a *Rodney on the ROQ* comp, even ALAN VEGA in parts; it's all over the place. In places it works, then it becomes total background noise. Worth checking out—for every song I got bored in the middle of, the next one would wake me up, as was the case with "Leo Cried," a weird early ULTRAVOX waver. This is the CD version, but there are cassette and LP versions too on P-Trash. I can imagine Carolyn Keddy putting this in her top ten. I might be wrong, but it seems like it's Keddy-core?! It is a one-man band and all! (LG)
(Off the Hip)

BREACH – "Godbox" 12"
For those unfamiliar with these Swedish monoliths of hardcore, BREACH not only produced a series of progressively impeccable hardcore records, they also managed to do so completely charged with their own sound—much like the MELVINS, they are incomparable. Every one of their records has seminal value and each one stands alone in its own right, while simultaneously part of a grander sonic narrative, welded to perfection in their 2001 LP *Kollapse*. So to have this in 12" format, on heavy wax, with artwork that complements that of their 1997 LP *It's Me God,* feels very fitting to the immense heavy sound contain therein. It should say 'enter *Godbox* with care.' If you're one of those people who can't just sit and listen, then I'd say skip this, as it demands that you actually pay attention to what is going on in the music. There's not a dead second of filler on this—everything here exists for a reason and exists in direct relation to everything before and after it from beginning to end, and if you miss any of it you may as well have missed it all. Because, unlike the sound that many 'post-hardcore' bands go for today, BREACH put more into it. There is arresting arrhythmia, bizarre ingenuity, an almost mathematical precision, obsessively distorted rhythm and bipolar change of pace. "Kill the Sun" is the perfect instrumental intro song, the sonic composition full enough without lyrics, just sounds of a woman (I imagine) being exorcized. Tomas Hallbom's vocals are still *so distinctively good*, like that of a wild wolf, growling, screaming and howling as "Leave" spirals into infinity with a gradual fade out. On the B-side, "Seconds Away" creeps up on you like a nightmare and sticks needles and pins through your eyeballs, while "Arranged Heart" comes at you like a thousand flying knives, chasing you off the cliff of sanity and into an ocean of icy venom and industrial toxins. If you like GODFLESH, KNUT, HELMET or BURST, then consider this the second coming. (LA)
(Apocaplexy / Serene)

BRICK MOWER – "My Hateable Face" LP
This is a classic example of modern East Coast pop-punk. Really catchy and driving with a strong undercurrent of PAVEMENT in their approach to song writing. And definitely in the vocals. Lyrics about this weird world we live in and the singer's experience inside it. The catchiness comes from the solid guitar riffs and not as much from the vocal harmonies. I'd call this pop punk for bookish types. I can dig it. (FS)
(Don Giovanni)

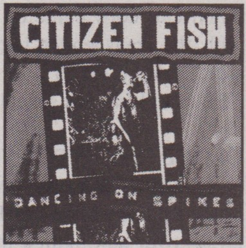
CELLGRAFT – "External Habitation" EP
CELLGRAFT were a short-lived grindcore band from Tampa, Florida. This 7" is a reissue of a cassette that came out a couple years ago. This is raw, to-the-point, no-frills grindcore which has a lot in common with early NAPALM DEATH and INSECT WARFARE. This 7" even includes a solid cover of NAPALM DEATH's "Scum." On a few tracks (and the artwork) there is a futuristic or cyborg or space idea/sound sort of like PSUDOKU. Tremendous stuff. Too bad the band has already called it quits. (MH)
(Regurgitated Semen)

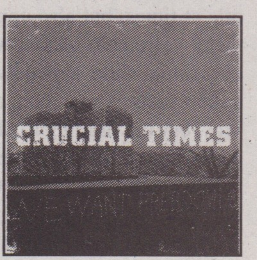
CHIMIKS – "Modern Storm" LP
More blown-the-fuck-out French punk. I'm picturing lots of sweat, spilled beer, moustaches, etc. While there are a fuck-ton of bands doing their damnedest to re-create the pandemonium of all those Crypt releases we cherish from 20 years back, the CHIMIKS went as far to get Mike Mariconda to record this fucker. It shows: frantic, loud and fucked from start to finish. Yes, you've heard this approximately a billion times already, but you can do a lot worse than *Modern Storm*. (MC)
(Barbarella Club, no info / Frantic City)

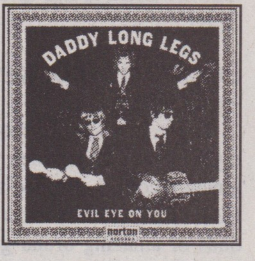
CINDY SISTERS – "She's Burning Inside/Waiting for Tomorrow"
HoZac Hookup Klub alert. What do you know, a boy band with a girl's name. Ha ha. I don't really give a fuck about that shit, but it's kinda stupid. Whatever. I guess these kids were sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds in 2005 when they recorded this, so I guess it's more a sign of the times. This is like primetime shitgaze material. I actually really wanted to hate it, but it is actually just droney distorto VELVETS shit that you instantly nod out to. Makes me think of MY BLOODY VALENTINE or maybe more so 39 CLOCKS or hella nugged/turned inside out JESUS AND MARY CHAIN. Were sixteen-year-olds really listening to 39 CLOCKS in 2005? That is kind of a trip. Both sides are solid good if you like lying around with a mild headache. (GB)
(HoZac)

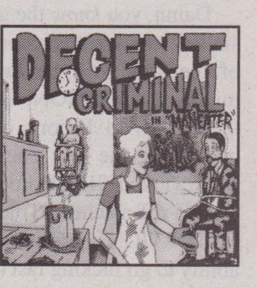
CITIZEN FISH – "Dancing on Spikes" CD
My presumption is that most folks reading this will be somewhat familiar (at the very least) with these UK ska-punk veterans/pioneers. Emerging from the ashes of the SUBHUMANS via CULTURE SHOCK, these chaps have been plying their hybrid of reggae, punk and ska (with the requisite horns), one way or the other, for a good 30-plus years. Inexplicably, on this new six-track effort, they kick it off with by far the weakest track. Fortunately, the remaining five are an upbeat mix of bouncy ska, with Dick's distinctive trademark vocals and lyrical insight. And just the right level of some guitar levity, to give the horns some additional bollocks. You can't really go wrong with the FISH. And here's yet more proof that old-school done right never stops sounding entirely fresh, relevant and goddamn danceable. (RK)
(Active / Bluurg)

CLOSET BURNER – LP
Belligerent, anthemic queercore from Bloomington, CLOSET BURNER draws on powerviolence, crust and raw, straight-ahead street punk in their grinding assault on heteronormative culture. Taking a stand against the intimidation, violence and internalized self-hatred faced by so many in and out of the punk scene, CLOSET BURNER keep it *so* fucking real, tackling sexual assault in queer communities on "Power Hypocrisy" and the problematic conflation of sex and gender on "Misinformation = Confiscation" before closing things out with a dual-vocal cover of WARPATH's "Abomination" that recalls the very best of '90s anarcho-









punk. Our copy came on translucent pink vinyl with the transgender logo screened on the B-side...dreamy. (WB)
(IFB / No I in Punk / Reality Is a Cult)

CLOUD RAT / XTRA VOMIT – split LP
I opened this and saw that the jacket was printed on an inside-out PINHEAD GUNPOWDER cover and figured that I might be into this split. The CLOUD RAT side is furious grindcore. This band is pissed and the riffing is pretty chaotic at times, but also comes together in a black metal-y, tremelo-picked wall of noise. There are occasional short slowdowns with more melodic guitar parts where you can explore your feelings, but the drummer is blasting or playing fast pretty much all the time. The VOMIT XTRA side is more hardcore/powerviolence-influenced, but also fast and punishing. There are more riff changes and start/stop tendencies. I dig that the tradeoff vocals don't feature a cookie monster—it keeps this recording shrill and thrash-y sounding. You listen to this split for both sides. (BL)
(IFB)

COGS AND SPROCKETS / GOD HARVEST – split EP
There is a special moment that happens every once in awhile when you drop the needle on a new record. I dropped the needle on the GOD HARVEST side and was assaulted with 20 seconds of amazing brutal grindcore. They eventually calm down to a burley brutal hardcore but never let up. COGS AND SPROCKETS make one hell of a racket with tons of noise, feedback and insane multiple vocalists. Something like the noise-meets-grindcore of AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED but not sounding the same. It still amazes me that some bands can capture this much energy in a recording. GOD HARVEST is from Florida and COGS AND SPROCKETS from Las Vegas and this 7" is worth checking out. (MH)
(Tack Head)

COLD WORLD / EXTORTION – split LP
Damn, you *know* the gods of blast beats were smiling the day this record was announced. Fans of the style will be familiar with Australia's mighty EXTORTION, a band who've endeared themselves to legions of powerviolence nerds by honing the raw energy of genre forebears INFEST and SIEGE into a polished, precision-crafted riff machine. True to these bands' legacy, EXTORTION's brilliance lies not just in their ability to go fucking fast (the nine blurry seconds of "Burn Down" should lay waste to any doubts on that subject), but in the interplay between manic grind and memorable, tension-building slowdowns. On the flip side is Austria's COLD WORLD (not to be confused with the brotastic US band) who sound punk as fuck no matter how eye-peeling the tempos get. Most surprising—and impressive—are their frequent flirtations with melody: a few where-did-that-come-from guitar solos along with some melodic walking basslines blew my mind by actually working on a grind record! The two bands compliment each other perfectly without a hint of redundancy—the essential formula for a classic split. (WB)
(Regurgitated Semen)

COMBOMATIX – LP
It is not easy to like two-piece bands these days. They really have to have something that disassociates them from the crowd. COMBOMATIX has a rather nasty sound—aggressive and ugly. The songs are fast and frantic enough that I can excuse the use of vocal distortion. For a two-piece, COMBOMATIX sounds better than most of their three and four-piece contemporaries. I like it. (CK)
(Frantic City)

THE CONNIES – "Full Round Roger" LP
Sheeyit. Punk rawk from Santa Rosa. Fuck, guys, I'm sorry. Your singer sounds a little too much like the STONE TEMPLE PILOTS guy. Like, this isn't grunge, it's actually listenable fun punk shit, many good, different songs, great production. But the guy sounds kinda too much like that other guy, I'm having a really hard time with it. Fuck. Am I allowed to say that? I mean, fuck, it's not like every second I'm thinking STONE TEMPLE PILOTS dude, but every time I'm over it I'll hear some little vocal inflection and get all weirded out. I have no doubt this is the best current band from Santa Rosa. (GB)
(Radio Galaxy)

CRUCIAL SECTION – "Standing on the Front Line" LP
This Japanese band has been around for a long ass time. I remember seeing them at Gilman in 2001 decked out in bandanas and flannels. These dudes took the "bandana thrash" look to the next level. These days they seem to have dropped that old look and have gone for a more basic hardcore sound on this LP. It is still the same RIPCORD/HERESY-style fast parts as their older shit, but they added some cool breakdowns in the mix. There is even a bit of youth crew influence in the riffs. This record is surprisingly decent and it's cool that this band is still around. (TM)
(Crew for Life)

CRUCIAL TIMES – "We Want Freedom" EP
They're called CRUCIAL TIMES...what do you think they sound like? Youth-crew-ish hardcore, obviously, with the singer hitting a Ray Cappo snarl a coupl'a times. Lyrics reference judgmental dooshez, an end to positivity, do-nothings and a song called "Arizona Can Suck it," which is about the state's immigration laws. (JU)
(Get Stoked!)

DADDY LONG LEGS – "Evil Eye on You" CD
It is definitely hard to resist the urge to make light of the idea of a blues band coming from Brooklyn, NY. Not that's there's anything wrong with playing the blues in hipster central. If it sounds good, I'll enjoy it no matter what the neighborhood. DADDY LONG LEGS sounds good. If it isn't 100% authentic, at least they've done their homework. Singer and band namesake DADDY LONG LEGS resurrects the ghost of Lee Brilleaux playing a wild harmonica and singing in a similar deep, gravelly voice. Next stop the Bushwick Delta. (CK)
(Norton)

DEAD MEAT – "Demo 1984" EP
What an interesting release. This short-lived band featured members of UKHC also-rans SOCIETY'S VICTIMS, the CORPSE and SEPTIC PSYCHOS (whose *awesome* tracks from the *Punk Dead—Nah Mate*... Pax Records comp are available on another EP released by this same label), and knocked out some very serviceable straightforward mid-tempo UK82 bangers. Nothing on this record necessarily stands out as a lost gem of the era, though "Police State" (inexplicably credited as "Place State" on the insert) is catchy enough to justify the entire release. Had two or three of these songs ended up on a Riot City or a Clay Records single you'd see their logo painted on leather jackets worldwide to this day for sure. That being said, it is a bummer how shoddy this packaging is. A crummy three-quarter photocopy cover, blank labels...there's not a lot of like about the presentation, but the material is worth hearing, especially for all the UK82 fanatics out there. (AU)
(Fear of War)

DEATH FROM ABOVE / FAVELA RISING – split EP
Brazil's DEATH FROM ABOVE play classic Brazilian style D-beat hardcore à la BESTHÖVEN—churning out two longer tracks that build their impact from steady, constant repetition of D-beat, thinly distorted guitars and boisterous vocals that crescendo into quick guitar squeals and solos before their collapse. On the flip, Minneapolis's FAVELA RISING (named after a 2005 documentary about squatter settlements in Brazil) takes some of the same elements but get loose with the distortion and recording, making for a more urgently assertive three tracks, as Portuguese lyrics spit over completely distorted guitars, noisy drums and insanely dropped-in guitar leads. Both sides hold their own and are complementary, but do set up a stark contrast between seeking the perfect "recording" and chancing the haphazard, in sake of immediacy. Lyrics on both sides question war and artificial modern life. (KS)
(Lixo Social)

DECENT CRIMINAL – "Maneater" CD
I don't know why music that sounds like this exists. Actually, I take that back. I do, it's because there are kids, and there always will be kids. Especially Californian and European kids. I guarantee that the members of this band will be in experimental or "indie" projects—that's if they stick with their instruments—within the five years. You grow out of this kind of thing guys, I promise. And as I type, a ska song starts. I rest my case. (GG)
(Decent Criminal)

DECIBELIOS – "Oi!" 12"

Spanish punk sure has enjoyed a newfound popularity over the last few years, with new generations of punks discovering a treasure trove of old bands through the internet and select reissues ranging from ULTIMO RESORTE to MG-15. Spanish Oi!, however, doesn't seem to have gotten the same recognition, especially not compared to the fertile French Oi! scene, which has lately seen well-received reissues from CAMERA SILENS and WARRIOR KIDS. According to the label, DECIBELIOS was one of the premier early Spanish Oi! bands and this is the reissue of their 1985 mini-LP. As one would expect, it takes its cues from the English bands of the day, mixing simple punk and hard rock jams with a bit of Spanish flair, as well as a cover of "Chaos" by the 4-SKINS proudly sung *en Español*. What maybe sets this apart—and simultaneously makes me cringe—are the two or three ska songs. Not a good look if you ask me. If you're a fan of Oi! in general, this is probably worth checking out; but for those like me who have little use for this stuff outside the absolute classics, it's hardly essential. (JH)
(Munster)

DEFEAT – "Warbride" EP

Sprawling and grim, this is a dense dose of claustrophobic, dark hardcore for the punx. The record starts out with a series of push/pull tempo changes, moving from hardcore kids playing black metal à la YOUNG AND IN THE WAY to epic chugging and back within the first 45 seconds. Suddenly things shift to a massive, punishing D-beat, but DEFEAT is careful never to let their parts become stale, even after the heavy crust vibe comes to dominate. Seriously, it's *unreal* how much they manage to squeeze into each side while keep everything coherent; even when some of the slower parts lose my interest, the next killer riff is never more than a few seconds away. The only exception is the closing dirge "The Tide," which, while pushing the dynamics even further over the top, ends up feeling superfluous. I didn't think I needed any more DEFEAT in my life, but I was dead wrong. Don't repeat my mistake. (WB)
(Regurgitated Semen)

DEFORMITY – "Shards" EP

After a series of demos and tad bit of internet talk, DEFORMITY has finally emerged with their first proper EP. This is a gritty recording, one which very much compliments the rudimentary hardcore contained herein. The title track starts off as a solid early-USHC-style ripper, but gets a little lost in guitar vamping towards the middle. A bit long, and not necessarily something I'd listen to that often, to be totally honest. On the other hand, the B-side's one-two punch of "Drench" and "No Time" is ripping. The menacing opening riff is the highlight of the record, as the whole song plays out somewhere between FEAR OF WAR and DISARM. "No Time" has a bit more of a CRUCIFIX vibe with the ranting vocal, though the wild solo betrays their oft-cited Italian HC influence as well. Beautifully presented, as to be expected from a La Vida Es Un Mus release. (AU)
(La Vida es un Mus)

DEPHOSPHORUS – "Night Sky Transform" LP

This band is doing something a little different from a lot of the dark hardcore acts out there right now with the addition of a dash of grindcore, which is preferable to bands trying to do NEUROSIS-meets-INTEGRITY and failing terribly. These guys are mostly fast and aggressive, some competent blast beats with descending triplets on the guitar and some death metal chunking amidst post-ish hardcore. Oh yeah, then there is a bunch of black metal influence in there, too—these guys are busy. The slower parts are still heavy and there isn't much about this record that is prettier than it needs to be. I think the bass is too low in the mix to achieve the kind of presence that would make this sound a little better, but this is not bad at all. (BL)
(7 Degrees)

THE DESPERATE FAGGOTS – CD

Dumb, jokey, borderline embarrassing punk that employs fake (?) British accents and various musical styles to completely waste your precious time. There're songs about Pokemon, their mom's eggs, being desperate and being a faggot. Big fuckin' whoop. (GH)
(self-released)

THE DESTRUCTORS / ZIPLOCK – split CD

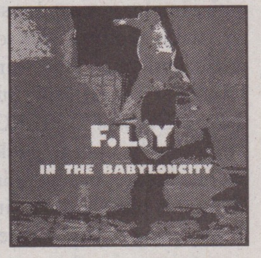
This split is a couple of bands with old school Brit hardcore sounds with some Oi! tendencies. I'm lukewarm on the genre, but these dudes seem to be doing all the things on the checklist to be this type of band: song called "Class Wars," band members with funny punk names, an upskirt drawing on the cover, etc. The DESTRUCTORS are more melodic with sing-a-long hooks while ZIPLOCK sounds angrier and tough, shirtless dudes probably hella mosh at their shows. The lyrics are about being down on your luck, drinking and fighting. This type of thing is so generically "punk rock" that I can't even think of comparisons… maybe RANCID, if they wanted to be British. (BL)
(Rowdy Farrago)

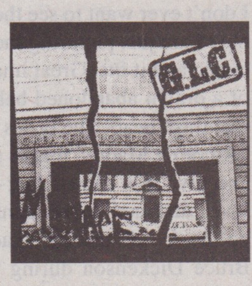
DISCOVER – "Food for the Warmachine" EP

Bludgeoning D-beat/noise punk done right, this is apparently a posthumous release from these Swedish rippers—what a bummer. In line with their "Totally Untalented Apocalypse Punk" aesthetic, the recording is lo-fi as fuck—you basically have to extrapolate the drum tone—but the riffs are there and it's great to hear bands on the faster side of this style that can still write actual *songs*. Lyrics are about…war (you guessed it!), and KAAOS and WARCOLLAPSE covers at the end of each side round out a totally satisfying take on the style. Start another band already, jeez! (WB)
(Rawmantic Disasters)

DISPOSE / KRANIUM – "Distort the North" split LP

A split between two raw, D-beat hardcore three-piece bands from Sweden. DISPOSE'S six tracks date back to 2010 with a heavily distorted attack of crashing destructive hardcore, with the vocals somewhat buried behind the massive layers of guitar distortion and rumbling D-beat. The vocals could totally glean a PRODUCT ASSAR / *Really Fast Vol. 1* vibe if pulled out of the murk, but the side is still pretty boisterous with rampaging riffs fighting their way out of the Japanese-styled total D-beat noise. Lyrics are DISCHARGE-haiku about war, which don't fail the urgency of the music. DISCHARGE was great, not only for the music, but the synthesis of visuals, lyrics *and* music. On the flip, KRANIUM miss that point with no translation or mention of the lyrics—and all the song titles are in Swedish, though the music holds its own with a tad more sludgy and bass-driven take on totally distorted D-beat hardcore, with scathing slathering vocals. They build this distorted tangle to some really overwhelmingly powerful moments, making for a powerfully crunching eight tracks. Limited 300 copies. (KS)
(Aktiver Ausstand in Plastik, no info / Crucificados / Dis Before Dishonour / Rawmantic Disasters)





DOGBREATH – "Get Out" EP

Four simple, punky pop songs with nasal vocals that at their best give nods toward the CARS and '60s pop, and at their worst are boring pop punk with unattractive vocal melodies that don't really hits those notes that they are shooting for. (PA)
(Anxiety Machine)

EDGE CITY RUINS – "Obliteration" CD

Generic and cheesy bar rock/punk from Oakland, California. Apparently someone from FANG is in this band, which would make sense considering dumb songs like "Pain of Being a Man," "Lick You Clean" and "Under That Skirt." Avoid like your creepy uncle. (JH)
(self-released)

ELEKTROLUX – "Robert Mitchum" LP

French folk that aspires to be American—like the LIVING END, who are Australians that want to be Americans. I'm sure hella Jack Daniels has wet the collective lips of ELEKTROLUX, I'm sure they also love JOHNNY CASH. Gritty, country-tinged rockabilly with an occasional SWINGIN' UTTERS nod and one confusing track that sounds almost like JOY DIVISION. (GG)
(Soviet Twist)

ESCROTO DE RATA – "Neber Main de Bollos" LP

Oh yes. Noise-y as it is rockin' '77-styled punk, this is rudimentarily hit-the-drums-hard with simple, yet catchy strumming on the guitar, with snotty knees-together gangly-singer weird midtempo shit—similar to their first LP. I know it's been said, but this reminds me of the creativity of TOREROS AFTER OLÉ, with catchy early upbeat punk. I have heard these sounds before, but there is something unhinged about this band and the simplicity of this record is why punk exists. A gatefold is really the only way to surprise the record listener in the full butt-and-balls view of this band inside. Oh my! I don't ever want to see their faces because right now I am just picturing their anuses playing this music and it fits. Great images on the packaging of a drawn abandoned baby superimposed on a real trash heap. The lyrics are fucked especially. "Amor de Madre" makes me want to laugh, cry and give this band a hug—these poor guys are lost…destined to be punks. The second song on the A-side has the exact same vocal solo as Bruce Dickenson during "Run to the Hills"… but imagine Johnny Rotten/Pee Wee Herman doing it. Familiar and simple, yet weird and exciting. (MB)
(La Vida es un Mus)

FIRST TIMES – "Runnin' Around" EP

Hailing from the island nation of Helsinki, these guys play some very cool power pop. I'm just kidding about Helsinki being an island nation, but I'm definitely not kidding about this being high-quality power pop. There is also something very pure about it. These strong female vocals and extremely catchy guitar licks can't help but remind me of SUZY Y LOS QUATTRO. If that doesn't mean anything to you, then you've got two new bands to look up. Highly recommended. (KK)
(Combat Rock Industry)

FIVE FINGER DISCOUNT / KRIMTÄNK – split EP

Hahaha, holy shit! FIVE FINGER DISCOUNT are a straight-up retro rockabilly/roots rock band—and not bad at that. How they ended up doing a split with a Swedish rapunk band is fucking beyond me, but it's an interesting pairing to say the least. At any rate, I quite liked the FIVE FINGER DISCOUNT stuff, especially "22 Nights" which could easily have been plucked off a "Roots of Punk" comp with its swaggering '50s drive. I've enjoyed KRIMTÄNK's MOB 47/C-beat style in the past, and this record is no exception—frenetic, just-barely-holding-it-together speedy hardcore with mean vocals and a couple of surprisingly tight live tracks tacked on to the end. "Häng Dem Högt" is a fucking excellent song. If nothing else, this is one split record that my wife and I can both enjoy (albeit for different sides). (AU)
(Pike, no info)

FLASHLIGHTS – "I'm Not Alone" LP

For the most part this is mid-tempo pop punk in the vein of the ERGS!, but a little less snotty and a little more heartfelt. The nasal vocals sing personal songs about depression, relationships and so on. If not at all original, at least it's kind of catchy. The better stuff on the record tends to be the lighter, less rock parts where the band (and mostly the vocalist) isn't trying to push things too hard where the picked-out guitar parts and melodies give the songs more of an indie/pop punk feel. (PA)
(Greed/Fantasy LTD / Protagonist Music)

F.L.Y. – "In the Babyloncity" CD

This album is fucking bananas. The only way I can semi-accurately describe this Japanese band's sound is by labeling them as "proto lounge punk." Think MR. BUNGLE meets ORDER; a bit bizarre but rocking at the same time. The bass is walking all over the place, some of the choruses are really catchy, others get lost under a flurry of leads the first time you hear them, but become more apparent with repeated listens. The recording is dirty enough to ensure the band still falls under the semi-static umbrella of "punk," but this is really unique stuff that could also appeal to jazz fans. I was floored by this CD, it's so outside of the realm of what MCR usually releases that I didn't really know what to make of it at first. I do know this: if I end up driving a flying cab in some incomprehensible future city fifty years from now, this will be on the stereo. (KM)
(MCR Company)

FRACASO – "Desafio Antiautoritario" EP

If you thought this Venezuelan anarcho band's demo was good, you are in for quite the treat. This record is fucking brilliant in its minimalism. FRACASO plays noisy modern hardcore in the vein of DESTINO FINAL, and they do it perfectly. The riffs aren't overly complicated; they're simple but they hit you immediately, and seem to get more intense every time they're repeated. The vocals are menacing and have that cool echo effect, and the lyrics to all the songs are brief and straight to the point. I get the feeling that the guitarist in this band can't play all that well, but some of the best punk riffs ever written were by people who couldn't ruin things by making the songs overcomplicated. Exercised restraint, believable anger and memorable passages are all traits of some great punk records, and this is a great fucking punk record. (KM)
(self-released)

DE FUCKUPS – "Stuff" 10"

Yet another band called FUCK UPS. Bob Noxious is turning in his grave. These guys are Dutch and really hard rockin' with wailing guitars. Really nice packaging with romantic pics of the band. The singer has a great voice but the music is a little too wanky for me at times. The guitar sound is badass as hell and up front and tough but too many solos. Don't get me wrong. They're a good band but some of the songs sound the same to me. The first song on side two is my favorite with a title that's too stupid to repeat. Get it. (RO)
(Platex)

FUMES – "Left to Rot" EP

This record makes me think about an increasingly boring trend in hardcore/punk as of late. I speak, of course, of the whole deranged, self-mutilating hardcore thing, currently in vogue with HOAX (a great band, to be sure) and some of their more clumsy imitators. A close cousin of "mysterious guy hardcore," this whole scene feels like a thin and desperate attempt by art school kids to gain a bit of grim attention. But I digress. This here record, as it turns out, is pretty good. The cover photos of a basement dungeon and its obese, masked gimp are a fitting indicator of the heaviness within, which balances fast, dark hardcore with sludgy and bass-heavy mosh parts reminiscent of like-minded souls FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS. This is not fresh or original by a long shot, but it will most certainly satisfy the urge for punishment the kids seem to crave these days. (JH)
(Crippled Sound)

GIRL GUTS – "Victoria" CD

Yep, you guessed it. All dudes in this band… but it's not all that bad. Classic land-locked in middle-America rock. They aren't trying to imitate any band, they are just playing music that's fun to play and they think sounds good. The styles they come with are all over the place. Often mismatched, but at times they can come up

with a catchy lick here and there. If it's anything, it's heavy '90s alternative, but it's also garage, it's also pop—it's also a lot of things. This CD really grows on you. The artwork made me think it was gonna be boring, but it's actually a lot of fun. I will *not* put this CD in the *MRR* free box, as I do with 95% of the CDs I get to review. If you live in Wisconsin (or feel like taking a gamble) track these guys down. (FS)
(self-released, no info)

GOFILTHGO – "5 Tracks Noise" EP

It's all right on the front cover, so you can know exactly what you are getting before you slide the wax out of the sleeve. Xeroxed war photos, nuclear mushroom clouds, skulls, studded jackets, nonsensical kanji and the proclamation that this is "Extreme D-Noise Terror!!!" But even with my preconceptions leaning in the direction of contrived rehashes of yesterday's latest craze, Greece's GOFILTHGO fukkn' floored me. Yeah, it sounds exactly like what they prepared me for with the artwork, but this is a thundering assault heavy on bass drum and white noise. This slab never strays far from the DISCHARGE model, but so much emphasis is placed on the drums that a completely different vibe takes hold and almost makes the now-traditional blown-out guitar and reverbed vocals an afterthought (both are still there of course, they just aren't the focus). The result here has as much in common with the electronic/techno/noise/hardcore hybrids from Japan (ABRAHAM CROSS, ELECTRO HIPPIES) as it does with the DISCHARGE-by-way-of-nuclear-damage that they are striving for. Apparently there are other records and these kids have been bashing this shit out for years…so much for my finger being on the pulse, apparently I need to start paying more attention. Killer. (WN)
(Crucificados / Rawmantic Disasters / Truemmer)

GOLDEN PELICANS – "Hard Head/Jump in a Lake"

This is going damn good with the three shots of Wild Turkey and the can of Coors I'm drinkin' as I listen to this. Great bluesy garage sloppy punk with a gnarly, growly-voiced crooner at the lead. Really reminding me of POISON 13 right now, which is a major fucking complement. Don't know where these losers are from but keep it up. "Hard Head" is the better tune to my drunken ears right now but I'll definitely keep my eyes and ears peeled for these degenerates. (RO)
(Total Punk)

THE GREEN TELESCOPE – "Two by Two" EP

The '80s garage revival never seems to get that much respect in these modern-garage-rock-lovin' times. But, I assume that will start to change since I have two great '80s garage reissues to review this month. This is the first EP by Edinburgh's the GREEN TELESCOPE originally released in 1985 (or 1986, as noted on this label). There are four songs of catchy, slightly dirty rock'n'roll. The songs are fast, the sound is primitive and the singer has one great voice. Plus, one of the songs is a cover of the OUTSIDERS' "Thinkin' About Today." The band would later become the THANES. This is very cool. (CK)
(Munster)

HAMMERHEAD GRUNTS – "Street Thrash" CD

If you're into speed metal à la VERMAFÜG and worship SLAYER, than this band is for you. HAMMERHEAD GRUNTS is like a speedy IRON MAIDEN that is simultaneously snotty in the way only punk can be. You can tell that these guys probably came from a street punk scene, but got a taste of hailing Satan and shredding the gnar and never looked back. (AE)
(self-released)

HAZEL'S WART – "Together We Didn't" LP

There's a part of me that's into this because it's like a baby blanket to me—this is the kind of thing I listened to when I was thirteen. Definite PIXIES and MY BLOODY VALENTINE influence, it actually sounds like SMASHING PUMPKINS playing HUM songs. Like all of Billy Corgan's bratty babyness put through a filter of shoegazy heaviness. It's good but I feel like it already happened. (MM)
(Skrot Up)

HEAVY NUKES – "Fucked Up for Life" EP

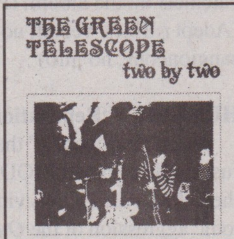
These are afflicted cries in the darkness of modern day war captured on vinyl. As heard here, HEAVY NUKES are most certainly not-so-distant cousins of SHITLICKERS. Their artwork is generic, but it conveys exactly what sound they are going for via ripped DISCHARGE graphics. If you can get over the packaging, it's probably one of the best raw worship releases I've heard—this includes all Scandinavian bands of the 1980s. If you played this for me and told me that they were some obscure Swedish band from 1981, I would believe you. I think it's really hard for the ferociousness of raw bands to get captured when recorded, but it was done here. This record is absurdly good and this isn't just vapid praise—HEAVY NUKES are like a studded plague that causes one to twitch as soon as the needle hits the wax. HEAVY NUKES are savage maniacs on punk similar to DISCLOSE. This EP just raised the standard for the whole genre—a new hardcore classic for 2012. (AE)
(Rawmantic Disasters / Static Age)

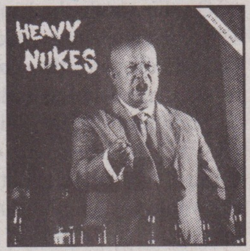
HOLLYWOOD MASSAGE VIBRATION – "Hangover Man Vomited" CD

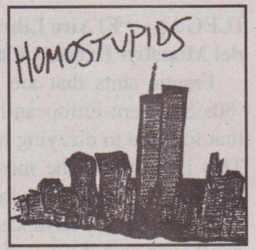
Well, this CD is a very interesting and surprising listen. The styles are all over the place. Some of it sounds like the more spastic, jazzed-out moments of the MINUTEMEN. Other parts remind of the schizo, show tune-like qualities of MR. BUNGLE. Even other parts of it sound like going to an insane jazz funk recital on acid. All the while, a truly deranged man is screaming over it in Japanese. Maybe I'm making this sound terrible, but it's really not. It's not great, but it's *definitely not* boring. I would recommend this to anyone who wants a truly indescribable, chaotic, energetic and challenging listen. (GH)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

HOMOSTUPIDS – "New Yorkin Jammin'" EP

The best band in America has a new 7". Rejoice. Unfortunately for you and me it's only available to *HoZac Hookup Klub* members. The song on the B-side is live, and unlike every other live song on the B-side of any other 7" it is an essential side. It continues the eternal sound of Midwestern miscreants, creating a "Cloud 149" feeling of disgust and dissonance that you will want to cling to like a life raft. The A-side contains two instant classics, more in the HOMOSTUPIDS tradition of essential genius, which is something like early TAR BABIES playing X_X songs whilst on a new cocktail of prescription pills. You know whatever corny reviewer description gets across that this band is just so good, speaking as someone that hates schticks and scenes and "wildman antics" something about the sound and ideas







put forth by these humans just is right. They are just a good band making great music, that's all there is to it. I gotta get a copy of this since I am a member of no hookup klubs. (LG)
(HoZac)

HUMONGOUS – "Miniature Pinschers" LP

This sounds like an off-kilter sorta alternative rock riot grrrl band—like a more conventional FINALLY PUNK. Songs about "Panty Boy" and "Keyboards," the latter probably being the catchiest on the album. (P$)
(Adept / Black Velvet, no info / Chinstrap / Consangioneous, no info)

HUNGER – "Reparations/Sick" EP

A good hardcore 7" that reeks of isolation and fuses a determined MODERN LIFE IS WAR or the DAMAGE DONE vibe with the earnest, melodic aggression of the *Out of Step* LP (especially in the vocal intonations, with the vocals otherwise doing a KID DYNAMITE thing) and a good dose of early-'80s-style thrashing as played by hardcore kids interspersed with good old mosh parts. This band could have easily failed at this style by being too epic or melodramatic, too ambitious, or simply not knowing how to piece these disparate elements together, but they write good songs that go a variety of places yet are logical and natural sounding, and it's convicted without being parody. God work. (DG)
(Prügelprinz)

HYGIENE – "Hygiene/Hygéne"

On this single the band performs two highly self-reverential songs, one of which is in French. I do actually enjoy the sub-genre of "songs where bands sing about themselves": "Our band could be your life," "Hard Skin", etc. I have to say the English one is very catchy despite (maybe because of?) being about basically nothing. On the whole though, this single lacks much of the intelligence and charm of HYGIENE's earlier releases, of which I am a fan. (AM)
(Sorry State)

ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del Monstro Tirano y Canibal" LP

Frantic shits that are obviously drawing on '80s Southern European hardcore, but they take that formula to dizzying heights on this creamer. This is probably the most essential record you will find in these pages this month…raw, primal and intellectually advanced. This is so good that I don't even care if it's contrived and calculated—I don't think it is, but it's good enough to transcend any surface critiques. Mandatory. (WN)
(La Vida es un Mus)

IRON DOGS – "Cold Bitch" LP

I wasn't here to assign this month, but when I saw that I was assigned this record, I realize that my taste is loud and clear. The cover is a nod to Frazetta with a live shot of a naked woman covered in some blood, wind-blown hair, in a cape with a bloody broad sword standing an a snow-covered plain, with wolves in the background. Nice, though I really don't think a feral woman would be that hairless, but fuck it, it's hot. The music: if like me, you are a punk that loves NWOBHM (not "ironically"), this is for you. There are bands doing the punk/metal shit like MIDNIGHT, but IRON DOGS is way more early-IRON MAIDEN than MOTÖRHEAD. It's all about the guitars here, but the bass does some interesting climbing, rather than noodling—very effective. It's the same with the drums, tight with perfectly timed fills. Everything works well here. The dueling guitars are pretty fucking cool and while they do not quite have the hidden weirdo twin language that MAIDEN's have, this is solid and the tones work perfectly together without the high end being piercing and annoying, that I hear so many punks that attempt this fall prey to. The vocals are good, but could use some raspy Paul Di'Anno channeling. This is a three-piece from Canada with members who have been in bands you love and hate. There are two guitar tracks with blazing solos and back-up vocals on each song, which makes me wanna see how they pull this off live. The lyrics paint scenes of distant lands of knights and dragons. Many will disagree and I am sure many punks will *hate, even loathe* this record, namely because it features a member from the notoriously whiny band GERM ATTACK. The one big problem I have with this record is the label Iron Bonehead and even though the band states in the liner notes, "Iron Dogs is fiercely anti-fascist! Homophobes, sexist idiots and bigots: F.O.A.D," the name of this label is suspect and who the fuck can tell what the hell is going on with ambiguous white power shit in Metal these days? Although this label does appear to put out metal from all over the world. (MB)
(Iron Bonehead)

IRON CURTAIN – "Year of the Wolf" EP

Meat'n'taters sXe hardcore from these London mashers with some good mosh, cool faster stuff (though they rarely get truly "fast") and the vocals are some the best and angriest that I have heard from a band of this style of 'edge 'core in quite some time (besides NO TOLERANCE, of course, 'cause that band is untouchable). One of those records where each track is better than the one before it. (JU)
(Anger Battery)

ISOLATION – "Isolation" EP

Five bare-bones hardcore tunes with some poppier elements and a pseudo-Springa style in the vocals. Pretty average stuff. (JU)
(Three Chords)

JAPANESE WOMEN – "The Decline of Western Civilization IV" flexi

I hate flexi records. They don't sound good, you only get one side, they're not cheap anymore and they generally don't have an easy time playing. Take this one for example. It has these weird bumps in it that make the needle jump around for the first half of the record so the best you can get is little snippets of the song. After a half an hour of pennies, tape and utter frustration there it is, it plays. Well, the first half of the song is thrashy, blast-beat hardcore with distorted, high-pitched screaming that leads into a long, droning breakdown with some added monotone talking part in the background. On the whole it sounds very late-'90s LA/San Diego. Not bad—but then it gets really good. First the drumming picks up into a pretty straight mid-tempo beat. Then while one guitar stays on a drone note, the other breaks into a catchy picked-out part that is reminiscent of THREE MILE PILOT at the time that they stopped being a hardcore band. In fact, the rest of the song tends toward that sound as layers of synths gradually join the mix and the guitar gets more noodle-y and a little bit more weird. All of this happens while the vocals maintain that snotty, distorted screaming style. After all the mean things I was saying to myself about this band an hour ago, they managed to pull of the best record of the month. (PA)
(Happiness)

JELLO BIAFRA AND THE GUANTANAMO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE – "Shock-u-py!" CD

Mr. B and the lads offer their homage/support to the once-mighty movement that was (and perhaps may be again), in their usual inimitable fashion. Two five-minute-plus rockers/stompers that mix hard rock, theatrical aural landscapes and more than a dash of DEAD KENNEDYS' *Plastic Surgery Disasters*-era hardcore, all stitched into both a stand for Occupy and an indictment of the current President Obama. The third track on this fifteen-minute opus is actually BIAFRA adding his vocals to a classic DOA cut from their latest long-player. Given that I'm particularly partial to DOA's brand of punk rock and reggae-infused rabble-rousers, this is my favorite of the trio, but there's no filler. Both BIAFRA and DOA are back to full form and then some. Old geezers back on top and all the better for it! (RK)
(Alternative Tentacles)

KIM FOWLEY – "Outrageous" LP

The Shitty Svengali himself, slim, foul Kim Fowley. "Animal Man," the "classic" off this real disgusting LP is just as weird and stupid as it was the last time I was subjected to it. KIM FOWLEY is the last living American genius and I hope he gets buried under a pile of Tijuana cocaine and mil-soiled bras because he creeps the hell out of me. Oh, by the way this is a straight reissue of a classic, cheeseball LP that this Laurel Canyone cokehead conned someone into putting out all the way back in 1968, and is like if the WEST COAST ART EXPERIMENTAL BAND covered the MENTORS. Real beat-off poetry. For fans of FRAMTID, KRIEGSHOG, KYKLOOPIEN SUKUPUUTO, DISCHARGE/CLOSE/ETC, JUDGE, SLAPSHOT, URBAN WASTE and WOMEN. A *proto-coke kla$$$$$$ik* (for before doing coke!) (BB)
(Vinilisssimo)

KING SALAMI AND THE CUMBERLAND THREE – "Can Your Monkey Do the Wurst?" CD

I was ready to dismiss this as some lame novelty record. The title's obvious and lame pun on the band name makes skin crawl. Fortunately the music makes up for that lapse in judgment. This is a band of guys who just want to have fun playing music. They mix up a bunch of different styles—surf, garage, rockabilly, frat rock, punk and everything in between, and just go with it. The result is some cool and catchy songs. Fun fact: drummer Eric Baconstrip was in the NIPPLE ERECTORS. (CK)
(Off the Hip)

KOWARD – "Overbred" EP

Boston punk filth and fury at its finest. KOWARD has their own symbol, for punk's sake. Living punk legends, these boys are. This EP contains demo songs we've played ad nauseam for a while now, finally on vinyl with the addition of "Overbred" and "Nightmare Man." The latter continues to haunt and the gruesome lyrics are cutthroat with their few word direct action. I spent months trying to trade for this test press like my life depended on it and had to sell my soul to get it, but I have no regrets. This is true raw hardcore punk and it's vile. Combine members of SCAPEGOAT and WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? and you get this mutant child. Can you hate mosh and pogo at the same time? I'm surprised they managed not to implode and hold it together for as long as they did in order to get this on vinyl. In true punk style, Boston punk usually destroys itself first. Enjoy or don't. (AE)
(Total Fucker)

LADY BANANA – "Adult Rock" EP

I thought this was gonna be terrible—you know, judging a book by its cover and all that—but it's actually decent, listenable garage-rock from France (or, at least the label is). Being from France, that accounts for the shitty name too, I guess. I dunno, I really wanted to hate this thing because I mean, just *look at it* (on the internet, I guess), but it's really pretty good, actually alright and if there's an extra copy in my box to take home and listen to, I think I'll do just that. There's kind of a KBD-keyboard vibe too, even though I can't tell if there're actually keyboards. Four songs and I like 'em all. It's stupid but in the way that punk should be; in fact, I really, really like this. It's just *punk music*. I like it in the same way I like LIVEFASTDIE. The title tune is fucking sick and *good for punk fans everywhere*. (BB)
(Frantic City)

LECHEROUS GAZE – "Bagagazo" EP

Real rock'n'roll today apparently comes from Oakland, California. These cats are as fun as ZERO BOYS and sound as classic as THIN LIZZY. This EP is for all you real rockers out there and fans of MOTÖRHEAD, PINK FAIRIES, MC5, and for those who just wanna have a good time—no pose. The amazing guitar is to be expected, as this is the post-ANNIHILATION TIME band. This record might as well have been blaring out of some sleazy dive bar's juke box in the 1970s, as the feeling contained in these riffs are from days long gone. This analog power rock record with its metallic twang is a resurgence of everything you miss about longhaired, far-out rock'n'roll. Tune in, get this. (AE)
(Who Can You Trust?)

LIFELINE LOST – "Your Turn is Last" CD

These guys must love PROPAGANDHI's *Today's Empire Tomorrow's Ashes*. Imagine what that album would sound like if it *wasn't* political. That's what you have here. My roommates are yelling at me to "turn this crap off." (FS)
(self-released, no info)

LEGENDARY WINGS – "Making Paper Roses" LP

Classic Dirtnap punk—crunchy, melodic guitars, neat bass lines and just lo-fidelity enough to be punk, but with strong pop sensibilities prevailing. Barely able to put a foot wrong, this label delivers the goods yet again. (GG)
(Dirtnap)

LIKE RATS – "Like Rats" 12"

So this is *supposed* to be "metallic hardcore à la HELLHAMMER and GEHENNA," but LIKE RATS has completely overlooked what makes those two bands great in the first place. For one, even when there is some interesting riffing going on (to be fair there are some cool riffs on here), the clean ass guitar tone makes shit sound totally stale and ruins it for me. But what I really can't get over is that they got the dude from CRADLE OF FILTH to be their vocalist. That's a bad look, especially when you drop some of my favorite bands as influences. All I'm saying is I'm hearing way more ARCH ENEMY than Tom G. Warrior riffs on this thing. That's that shit I don't like. (TM)
(A389)

LIMBS BIN – "Primitive Response" EP

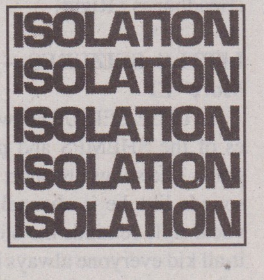
Electronic noise presented as hardcore punk, LIMBS BIN destroys the Noize Not Music paradigm completely. Abrasive blasts of unadulterated aggression, distorted far past the point of any recognizable musical form (even the BLACK FLAG tune is a cover in name only). This will try the patience of some, frustrate others and send a select few to a dark place. After last year's *Familiar Combatants* cassette, I am firmly in the last group…these are difficult sounds. (WN)
(Familiar Combatants / Tickled Meat)

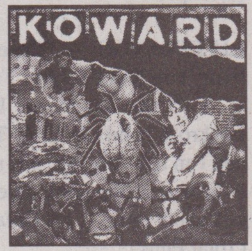
LIMINAÑAS – "Crystal Anis" LP

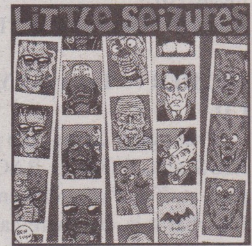
Two-person band that sounds like the Reid brothers got stuck in a spaghetti western. Total JESUS AND MARY CHAIN vibrations, MO TUCKER with a seductive French accent. Like listening to the *Quine Tapes* on drive-in movie speakers. Probably 50,000 blog rockers crying in their pillows about it as I type this. If you like DUM DUM GIRLS early works you probably already have this… (LG)
(HoZac)

THE LINE – "Hey Ho the Line" EP

If I saw this record in a dollar bin, I'd guess it was 1996 youth crew (the band's name in Impact Italic kind of gives it away) from some Pennsylvania band of former vegan warriors that maybe later played a show with 97A once or twice, and had come out on XStart TodayX Records as their second of four releases or something. Listening to the music itself, this description isn't too far off the mark: Double-time fast parts alternate with chugging breakdowns that are heavy on the open E and very mid-'90s, and a toneless bass that's pretty loud. The A-side is three songs, one of which is a very loosely interpreted cover of "Blitzkrieg Bop" with lyrics changed to pay tribute to the band themselves, as well as Warsaw hardcore, which is also included on the B-side, which consists of three live songs recorded poorly. I could see this record being exciting for hardcore fans living in or near Warsaw, or a fun throwback record for anyone with a permanent scowl since SLUGFEST or RANCOR or who-







ever played their last shows, but it's not much my thing. (DG)
(83 / No Bread / Rotten Gorol)

LITTLE MISS AND THE NO NAMES – "Mind" EP

First off, terrible name. For a moment of lazy journalism on my part this is reminiscent of DEVOTCHKAS but with more of a hardcore influence. Street punk that leans towards hardcore. Members of SEPTIC DEATH. (MM)
(Headbones / Rigid)

LITTLE SEIZURES – "Can't Take It No More" EP

LITTLE SEIZURES were born from the ashes of the SHEMPS and play fun, bratty garage punk. The songs are short and catchy. The singer sounds like he is channeling Gregg Turner. His vocal style reminds me of that obnoxious, know-it-all kid everyone always kind of tolerates 'cause he's entertaining. Cool stuff. (CK)
(Go Ape)

LIVEFASTDIE – "Practicing for the Gangbang/You Ruin All My Fun"

A 45 shit out by the long-dead future KBD freakrock band LIVEFASTDIE. This band is sick and I'm into this shit, this shit is great. The titular A-Side is a fine punk tune. The B-side is catchy and about drugs—a *winning combination*. (BB)
(Total Punk)

LIVING IN HELL – "Portões" EP

This is some ugly crust from Brazil with chunky metallic guitars and blasted out death-growl vocals. This is old-school putrid shit that gets people all headbanging and drunk moshing, not new hipster tripe with melodic post-whatever noodling. The rhythm section steamrolls through riff after riff while guitars add flourish with aggro leads between chunked picking. The vocals are incoherent death metal throat-tearing with delay added just in case. I dig it, kind of reminds me of ACEPHALIX before they went completely metal. (BL)
(Cianeto / Insane Noise / Terrötten)

LUTHER – "Let's Get You Somewhere Else" CD

These guys do the emo pop thing à la GET UP KIDS and TAKING BACK SUNDAY. This is slick stuff and is catchy enough. Definitely good for what it is, but there have been tons of bands doing this the last decade. I am not blown away here and this is more of a Warped crowd thing but it is all right. (RL)
(Chunksaah)

LYRES – "Lyres Lyres" LP

I grew up thinking LYRES were one of the biggest bands in the world. Yeah, I was naïve, but there was a time when it seemed every time I turned on the radio I heard "Help You Ann." So I bought that 7" before I was in my teens and it is still one of my favorites. LYRES pretty much set the standard for my garage-loving self ever since. If you've never heard LYRES before pick up *On Fyre*, also reissued on Munster. Once you've devoured it, it's time to turn to *Lyres Lyres*, the band's second album from 1985. Things slow down a bit, but the record still rips. This LP continues the incorporation of front man Jeff "Monoman" Connolly's great songwriting with some really cool obscure cover songs. The band, which is mostly the same as on *On Fyre* (drummer John Bernardo replaces Paul Murphy), just kills. The result is the perfect combination of talent and record collector acumen. Those two don't meet that often. Entertaining liner notes written by Lenny Helsing of the GREEN TELESCOPE, whose EP also was just reissued by Munster. Get this. (CK)
(Munster)

LYRES – "On Fyre" LP

After the breakup of much-loved punks DMZ, the crazed front man genius known as Monoman formed LYRES, a group that took the '60s punk influence of his former band and pushed it way into the forefront. The result was a string of countless amazing records (*On Fyre* being the first long-player) that helped birth a punk-rooted '60s revival that has only just recently tapered off as the prime mode of rock expressionism for nerdy dirtbags the world over. What's astonishing about LYRES is that their songs, recordings and image are every bit as authentic and outta this world as their influences. There are tunes here just as legendary as anything heard on *Nuggets* or any other high-water mark for garage rock, no fuckin' joke. Although I'm certain that interested domestic parties could check any given used bin for LYRES vinyl, Euros are treated to this exceptionally nice reissue. Either way, one of the best pure rock'n'roll records of the 1980s and something everyone should own. (MC)
(Munster)

LYRES – "Soapy/You'll Never Do It Baby"

A lot of *MRR* readers are probably already familiar with Boston's excellent garage group the LYRES. For those of you who are not, the LYRES were formed after the demise of the great DMZ by vocalist and keyboard player Jeff Connolly. They took a more '60s approach than DMZ that is very similar today to a lot of stuff put out on the Trouble in Mind label. Unfortunately, this 45 does not include anything new, as the A-side is a track from their first LP *On Frye* and the flipside is taken from their follow-up LP *Lyres Lyres*. I guess that is because this 45 is limited and a teaser for the reissues of said LPs. Still, if you are not familiar with the LYRES this might be a good place to check them out. Or if you are just a completist of this band, this might also pertain. Limited to 300. (JF)
(Munster)

MAGIC SHADOWS – "Sunburned Mind/Under the Stairs"

This is modern garage. Two songs of repetitive riffs covered in reverb. The vocals are sing-songy and go with the beat of the tune. I wish the songs had a bit more edge and were catchier. Instead the music puts me into a bit of a trance. (CK)
(self-released)

MANNEQUIN MEN / ROOFTOP VIGILANTES – split EP

I'm not sure how a band can sound like a soundtrack, but MANNEQUIN MEN immediately take me back to the *Repo Man* soundtrack. They play mid-tempo, old-school punk rock that has a certain eeriness behind it. When I say old-school punk, I mean they take me back to a time when being a punk band didn't require that you play loud and fast. Seriously, the two MANNEQUIN MEN songs are two of the strongest tracks I've heard on a split EP in a long, long time—dark, catchy, creepy and poppy all at the same time. ROOFTOP VIGILANTES put together a couple of very solid tracks of their own and continue with the theme that punk doesn't have to be loud and fast, though they do have their moments of loud and fast. In fact, they have an ability within a song to go from soft and delicate to loud and desperate. I can't remember hearing a split EP of this quality in ages, maybe ever. (KK)
(Replay)

MARGY PEPPER – "Golden Webs" LP

This is some very soft and sweet underground indie from Olympia, WA. This whole album is really cute (and I know that can be perceived as an insult, but it's not). To give you an idea, in their thank you list, they thank all their "friends and kitties" that supported them. But aside from aesthetics, musically they are really awesome. They are like a teenage bedroom SLEATER KINNEY. Sometimes they can get noisy, but mainly play upon melodies and harmonies to communicate thoughtful and poetic lyrics. They're not talking about kittens in their lyrics; they delve into serious personal and societal topics and vocalize them with vibrant imagery. It's a very K records type of sound. This whole record is fun, bittersweet and heart warming. (FS)
(self-released)

MASCARA NITES – "Wish List" LP

I've got mixed feelings about this one. It's good, no doubt about that. I mean, the guitarist knows how to play guitar. The drummer keeps good time. The triangle player knocks it out of the park. And the music is catchy power pop, which is right up my alley. Here's the thing. Well, there are two things. The first thing is that the vocals seem like they're mixed a little high. The second thing is that it's all delivered sort of matter-of-factly. It lacks a sense of urgency, which is generally a deal-breaker. (KK)
(Shake!)

MASCARA NITES / THE POOR CHOICES – split EP

The MASCARA NITES track, "Tiger Lily," sounds like CHEAP TRICK recorded through a blanket with confusing appearances by

some sort of muffled brass instrument. Their second track sounds just like BLONDIE, and as it's a BLONDIE cover, that is OK. The POOR CHOICES have a garage LUNACHICKS vibe. Snarly, fuzzy rock'n'roll. (GG)
(Shake!)

ELS MASTURBADORS MONGÓLICS – LP

Here we have a resurrected recording from this Barcelona punk band from 1978. It's primitive, raw, out-of-tune punk with enough cohesion to keep bobbing your head (or tearing up your bedroom). There's a fair amount of psych rock creeping in the mostly careless guitar leads, but it doesn't bug me too much since there's way more punk than "talent." Guitars and vocals are right up front, but not completely burying everything else. There's a great retrospective on the insert in Spanish and English telling the history of the band, and stories that prove them to be more infamous than many of their contemporaries. But you'll just have to pick it up to find out. Mandatory for fans of all things Spanish punk. (MA)
(Munster)

МАТЕРИК – CD

Oh my gosh, Russian pop emo here. These guys are OK, they really don't suck but they sound just like every other mediocre emo band trying to break through. Vocals in Russian, this is really best for people who love pop emo. (RL)
(Oops)

MEDICAL TOURISTS – LP

More. More is sometimes better. MEDICAL TOURISTS really need to be more of something. Their self-titled LP is teetering on the edge of something truly fascinating. Drum machine and synthesizer post-punk (yes, with guitar and bass) with a DEVO worship vibe and the most head-scratching BAD BRAINS cover I have ever heard. The sad part is the nature of the cover is the only really head-scratching thing about this record. If the songs were more *anything*, really, this record could be a must-listen, with potential to be completely love-it-or-hate-it level of interesting. If it were only more damaged, or dance-y, or varied in approach or tempo… if only the instrument tone was more interesting, or if the lyrics were more interesting, or the vocals more bored, or more crazy… I think you get where I'm going with this. I give these guys a score of: "OK, but shit or get off the pot." (LP)
(Rerun / Import Export)

MENACE – "G.L.C." EP

MENACE were one of the first wave of bands to pop up in the UK's '77 punk explosion. They split up in 1979 after releasing five singles. Originally released in 1978 on Small Wonder, "G.L.C." was their second single, a nuanced, sophisticated challenge to their local city council: "G.L.C. G.L.C., you're full of shit!" If the title track and the first song on the flip were stomping proto-Oi! in the SHAM 69 vein, the last song, "One Way Street," betrayed a pop side that could have led to a lucrative new wave career if they'd stuck together. All five of their singles are getting the reissue treatment to coincide with some upcoming US tour dates. (AM)
(Queer Pills)

MESA COSA – "Infernal Cakewalk" CD

Two things that I have a hard time grasping are the Australian hype wave (Is it over? Was it ever really a thing?) and garage rock (just not my bag, daddy-o). Here the two collide in the form of very, very rock'n'roll garage with some Spanish lyrics and horns buried in the mix. Sometimes there seem to be tinges of psychobilly that creep in, but that could be more just me worrying that this will turn out to be a psychobilly CD. When they get more punk, the songs are actually kind of fun and bouncy. I could even see someone pumping a fist or two to them. Coincidentally, the songs in Spanish are the more punk ones. I have the distinct feeling that had this been an LP, it would have gone to a reviewer who would have frothed all over it. However, you'll just have to wade through my tepidness. (LP)
(Off the Hip)

MEURTHE / VEUVE SS – split 12"

Presentation shouldn't make or break a record—we listen to this shit for the music—but fukk me this record looks badass. No need to go into it, but my interest was piqued well before I dropped the needle. But we listen to this shit for the music...and the music here is every bit as good as the package implies. MEURTHE delivers one mesmerizing track of ambient sound that lands somewhere between EDGAR FROESE and THROBBING GRISTLE, but as excellent as it was, it was VEUVE SS that really had me chuffed. Their demo tape was nothing short of brilliant, and while the opening track on their side left me wanting, the remaining two delivered exactly as expected. Chaotic and abrasive music devoid of any melody whatsoever, vocals like shards of glass and song construction akin to the no-rules aspect of early '90s US hardcore. Disturbing, and a perfect compliment to the sounds on the flip. A top-notch release in every aspect. (WN)
(Nerdcore / Macquillage & Crustaces)

MIDNIGHT WOOLF – "I'll Be a Dog" CD

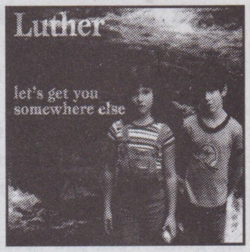
Basic, three-four-chord Rip Off Records-eque garage'n'roll mixed with rockabilly, lead by a guitarist who can handle generic riffs and deliver generic lyrics. Pompadours, Betty Page bangs, striped t-shirts and leather jackets aplenty here. This record in two words? Sure: nap time. (GG)
(Off the Hip)

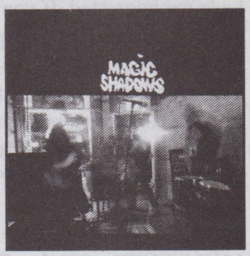
MISSING MONUMENTS – "(I'm Gonna) Love You Back to Life" EP

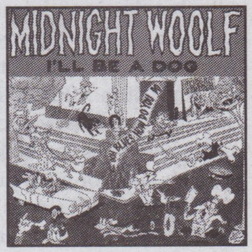
Strummed indie pop, with hopeful lyrics and compositions simple enough you could practice playing your instrument to this. All three tracks on this 45 are pretty forgettable and despite their uncomplicated, three-chord nature (and mandatory solos), they just don't really make an impression on me. "Another Girl" on side B is about not wanting another girl 'because they just don't love me like you'—it's good mixtape material if you're in high-school and want your girlfriend to take you back. You're probably not gonna be together in five years from now anyway, so I wouldn't worry about it too much. (LA)
(HoZac)

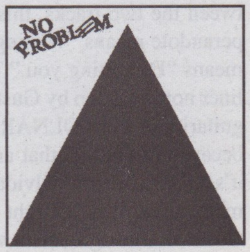
MOTEL BEDS – "Dumb Gold" CD

Jangled indie-pop-punk in the arena of a less-chaotic BANANAS, a more refined version of the THERMALS, early TEENAGE COOL KIDS and CHRISTMAS ISLAND. This album goes into brief periods of balled, navel-gazing at times that I could do without, but over all, this is good stuff. (GG)
(No More Fake Labels)









MUHAMMAD ALI – LP

As everything from the '90s is apparently new again, it therefore makes sense that pop punk bands would start weaving elements of indie rock from that era into their songs—thus, MUHAMMAD ALI. Bearing many trappings of other bands associated with Dirt Cult, such as a boisterous, party-directed delivery, but intertwining guitar work and occasionally song structure learned from college radio circa 1992, MUHAMMAD ALI delivers just enough on this EP to keep me interested. If you like fun and not necessarily deep modern pop punk, or if you like(d) early SUPERCHUNK, give this a listen or two. I like when the songs get a little less pop punk myself, but there's something on every track that makes me want to listen to the next one. If only the lyrics were better. (LP)
(Dirt Cult)

MÜLLTÜTE – "Keine Zeit" EP

Awesome second EP by this Berlin duo. These six tracks of raging hardcore punk do not disappoint. The guitars are inventive but straightforward and just slightly overdriven for an effective bite with every strum. This sound brings to mind classic German hardcore like MOTTEK mixed with some of the brilliant stuff coming outta Copenhagen in the early to mid '00s. HeartFirst doesn't disappoint. (MA)
(HeartFirst)

NAPOLNARIZ – "Esperandote/Olvidandote"

This is a great record. I don't mean just musically, but this is an intense and very real testament to a creative friendship that almost ruined two people. "Olvidandote" is an instrumental and while it is *MRR* policy that we do not review instrumentals, you cannot listen to this record without hearing both sides—it's like hearing both sides of an argument. First the music, the "Esperandote" side is a slow into midtempo melancholy song with great vocals and lyrics. There are great guitar leads and bass work The drums are solid and sort of a nice fluid style that is not sloppy, but makes me think that the whole composition of the song is the trajectory, not just the rhythm section. It has a sad feeling to it, yet danceable and a great sing along. The "Olvidandote side is garage-y and poppy with great melodies. It's faster than the A-side with some cool tempo stalls, impressive bass work and melancholic yet upbeat guitar riffs. The time is metered with constant high-hat against the droning of the guitars, which have a bit off and chaotic timing. It's a cool song though the recording is not the greatest. Regardless of the vast differences between the two tracks, this is the same song. Esperandote means "Waiting for you," olvidandote means "Forgetting you." The story is told in the liner notes written by Gustavo Rivera, the former guitarist of NAPOLNARIZ, who left the band because of conflict that arose from this song. In it's original form "Olvidandote" was an instrumental that was brought to NAPOLNARIZ by Gustavo. The agreement was made between Jon, singer and guitarist of the band, and Gustavo to use his song, but it quickly changed from a song about forgetting someone who left, to "Esperandote": a song about cutting out from a miserable life and waiting for someone in hell—same story, different view points. The song took on its own life and inevitably the claim on the song was debated upon within the band. Arguments arose and when Gustavo played his original version of the song with his other new band, a fistfight broke out between the members of NAPOLNARIZ. The lyrics to "Esperadote" became reality. Sadly, long standing collaboration and deep friendships were ended. Both NAPOLNARIZ and Gustavo ceased to play the song and it was pulled from the NAPOLNARIZ LP. After many years, Jon contacted Gustavo to see if they could do this record together. Gustavo agreed, wrote the liner notes, in which we learn this story. At the end of this tale, he presents this song for the first time saying, "The truth is that I feel honored, because this symbolizes the re-concretion of our friendship." Both of these songs are very different and both very good, which makes this record and its story truly great. (MB)
(TPV)

NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS – "Ocean Beach/ Shark Beach"

This record arrived with news that this would likely be the last release by NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS, as band members move away from the Bay Area. That is too fucking bad, as this single is a rager. If you like your punk rock straightforward, slightly eerie and delivered with a sense of urgency, this is right up your alley. If you also appreciate female punk vocals that aren't necessarily sticky sweet, then you owe it to yourself to find this one. This embodies why I got into punk rock some 30 years ago. Seriously. (KK)
(Falsified)

NHL95 – "Songs for the Decline of Me & You" LP

Pretty awesome early-'90s Cruz records-style pop punk. NHL95 have a sound similar to ALL and BIG DRILL CAR with a little FUNERAL ORATION thrown in for good measure. Hell, I can totally picture this band being on the SoCal side of the *Big One* compilation LP or playing during a pool scene of one the Thrasher skate videos. Good stuff. (JF)
(Pop-poo)

NIGHT BIRDS – "Fresh Kills Vol. 1" LP

A collection of somewhat hard-to-find songs from this well-known New Jersey band. This LP includes their demo and first three EPs. If you've been living under a rock for the past couple of years and don't already know, NIGHT BIRDS play surf-tinged LA-style punk. I'm not that into any of their records (including the ones on this album); they tend to push the vocals up way too high and everything sounds super polished, but they definitely know how to craft a catchy tune and they fucking kill it live. These guys seem to be quite popular amongst many different circles of punk, and it's easy to see why. They're fast enough to appeal to the hardcore crowd, catchy enough to satiate the pop punks and accessible enough for the fringe/street punk folks. If you missed out on any of these releases the first time around, this is your chance to get their early material on vinyl. (KM)
(Grave Mistake)

NOFX – "Self Entitled" CD

News flash! This CD is being reviewed by somebody who actually is a fan of this band. Yeah, I know they can be blamed for inspiring a bunch of horrible, and I mean horrible, Warped Tour imitators that have flooded the scene for the last two decades, but the same can be said about any good band and their horrible imitators. I also know that almost everyone who is reading this magazine has or still owns at least one NOFX record. Seriously, in a year NOFX will have been around for three entire decades. While they have gotten way more talented in that time, there basic sound has remained true. The question than becomes how does *Self Entitled* rank as a NOFX record? Well it is no, *Ribbed* or *White Trash* in my mind, but does rank better than there last couple of releases. The first track "72 Hookers" kicks off this record as a juvenile *Porky's*-ish solution to suicide bombers. Deep thinking, in depth analysis this is not. "Ronnie and Mags" has already been released on a 7", but further keeps with Fat Mike's obsession with Ronald Reagan. Actually where NOFX really shines on this record is the more personal songs, "Cell Out" deals with some of the more critical punks interactions with the band. The song "I've Got One Jealous Again, Again" is a follow up song to "We Got Two Jealous Again" that came out close to a decade ago. The new song deals with separating your records after a divorce while the earlier version of course dealt with falling in love with a mutual appreciation of the same records. If you are a NOFX fan I say get this record. If you are so/so, but wanna see what these guys are up to these days, I also say get this record. If you already know you hate NOFX, why are you still reading this review? Life is short, so fart and smile. (JF)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

NO PROBLEM – "Living in the Void" EP

This is some solid '80s throwback hardcore with SoCal vibes—think TSOL and AGENT ORANGE. Not really my thing, but the three songs on here are very solid. This band already dropped an LP on Deranged, so if you liked that, you probably won't be mad at this EP. (TM)
(Debt Offensive)

NONES – "Shake Your Brain" EP

I own and like a lot of HoZac records from a few years back, but this is bad contrived rock. When there's no substance, it's all about vibez. These vibez are about waiting by the phone for Scion to call. (P$)
(HoZac)

NO///SE – LP

I have no idea how to pronounce the name of this band. What I do know is that these guys can't decide if they want to be the BUSINESS or JOHNNY THUNDERS. This album is a little bit Oi! and a little bit punk'n'roll, but it's all way too safe-sounding. The "whoa-ohs" are used much too often and the riffs are incredibly generic. It's just an uninspired LP all around. It sounds like this is a band comprised of clueless dudes from Southern California that sort of like punk, but really just want to "make it." (KM)
(Challenge the Throne / Rotten to the Core)

NO SUBMISSION – "I Still Believe" EP

East Coast political hardcore at its most forgettable, this sounds like some youth crew kids discovered Profane Existence and wanted to throw some D-beats in there but totally missed the mark. There are bands where this loud-talking vocal style works, but here it just feels out a place and drags the whole thing into the tough-guy realm, a weird statement when the lyrics are strictly by-the-book left-wing punk politics. The usual slew of palm-muted breakdowns and gang vocals help keep things positive for the kids, but it ends up that the whole is somehow less than the sum of its parts. Even beyond the oh-so-clean production (you can tell this band was raised on '90s melodic hardcore) everything about this record is safe, right down to schoolchildren pledging allegiance on the cover. Next, please. (WB)
(Get Stoked! / Get Outta Town)

NO TOMORROW – "Nuclear Exposure/Burning Inside"

An epic mid-paced bombastic raw punk number as the A-side, "Nuclear Exposure" is a little too laid-back to stand on its own, but it leaves me anxious to flip this slab and get me earholes hammered by the assault that absolutely *must* be waiting for me there. Instead, "Burning Inside" is a Japanese-hardcore-by-way-of-DISCHARGE burner that only ramps the speed up a few notches—a more chilled-out approach to blown-out hardcore and with a sincere shredder doling out leads. Vocals are harsh and the presentation is huge, but my main impression from this record is that I want more—I want them to not play it safe, I want to be decimated and while they clearly have the tools to take care of that job, I don't think this two-song teaser pulls it off. Don't get me wrong, it's good, I just want it to be better. (WN)
(Sorry State)

OCCULT DETECTIVE CLUB / SOMETHING FIERCE – split 10"

SOMETHING FIERCE opens this up with nice and cleanly produced STRIKE-esque, bass-lead pop perfection. No fuzz to hide crappy musical ability here, and nothing is buried in the mix—just well written and executed pop gems. Love it. OCCULT DETECTIVE CLUB plays a similar style of pop-drenched punk rock in a distinctly Texan, early MARKED MEN style with sprinkles of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS. Great match-up; Dirtnap gets the job done again. (GG)
(Dirtnap)

PEROXIDE – "Can You Hear the Sound of Peace?" EP

After a point, a lot of releases from the raw punk scene look and sound exactly the same. Originality is not what most bands are going for these days, but PEROXIDE did it. Like a noisier, more pogo-able version of LSD with Scandi guitar solos and a menacing metal-punk undertone, this release is more than ripping. The solid, fast drumming makes your heart skip a beat and it carries the record through on both sides. I reviewed their demo a few moons ago and gave it due justice. This band has aged well since then and now deserves to be on vinyl. PEROXIDE is the ever-present reminder that Portland punk is still potent and reminds me of another modern day punk killer, MAUSER. Another solid release from Distort Reality, get on it! (AE)
(Distort Reality)

PHOENIX FOUNDATION – "Silence" LP

A new 12" from Finland's PHOENIX FOUNDATION always makes me happy. While I know some people aren't enthralled by them as I am, they still sound like a perfect blend of HOT WATER MUSIC, GUNMOLL, Luxemburg's PETROGRAD and fellow countrymen and labelmates JUKEBOX MANIFESTO. In other words, strong emotional driving punk in that beardcore vein. (JF)
(Combat Rock Industry)

PICTURE FRAME SEDUCTION – "Hand of the Rider + I'm Good Enough (For Me)" LP

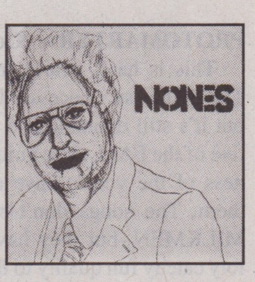
I was actually listening to *Hand of the Rider* the other day and noticed how it starts really strong then kinda gets a bit repetitive—but then, unlike many LPs that take this turn, it picks back up and rules through the end. PICTURE FRAME SEDUCTION were from Wales and their sound is comparable to UK bands from that era like GBH but with less stupid lyrics. The recording is a bit flat compared to some of the bigger acts of the time, but the content is just good enough to overlook that. Tracks like "Old Soldiers," "Peace and Quiet" and "I'm Good Enough (For Me)" are classic UK punk anthems to my ears. This platter contains their first 7" and LP, and it's great to see this material back in print. Recommended! (MA)
(Queer Pills)

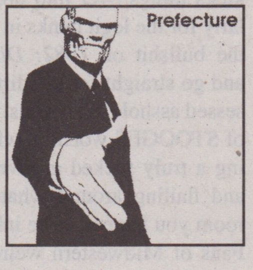
PLAGUE DOGS – LP

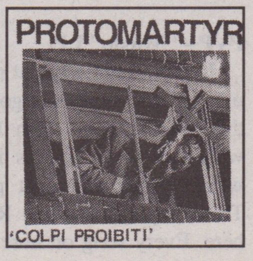
Here's some crust from Philly for you kids to mosh to. There isn't much broken with D-beat so these guys aren't fixing it with anything new-fangled and extraneous—it's pretty stripped down and raw for the most part. The riffage is a little slower and rock'n'roll influenced for my taste, but this is more of a classic US crust sound like HELLSHOCK or WARTORN do. Totally solid musicianship with some good lead work on the guitar and complete hate from the vocalist. Why do I feel like studding up a jacket? (BL)
(Sit and Spin)

PREFECTURE – "Automatic Labor" EP

The music here is pretty good, but the vocals damn near ruin it for me. If you ever wanted to hear Eric Cartman from *South Park* front a band, here it is, and he even does a Ray Cappo impression at one point. The rest of the music walks the line between aggressive garage punk and snotty, mid-paced hardcore that's moody and without frills, except for the occasional guitar lead, but has some good hooks nonetheless. The second song is a faster, early-'80s-style hardcore song with a morose, Midwest vibe to it (it doesn't sound like the NECROS, but I get the same sort of feeling here as I do from the *IQ32* EP). The recording has a nice, slight fuzz to it and despite the vocals, I'm able to look past them and get into this record after a couple of listens. (DG)
(Rerun)







PREVENGE / SHARED ARMS – split EP

PREVENGE are pretty fuckin' cheesy, man. Maybe it's just me. I must admit I am pretty tired of dudes with gruff singing voices. It just seems to be such an anonymizing element for a lot of these bands, especially when you're talking about pop punk songs with enough chords to count on one hand. Furthermore, at this point, I don't know whom to signal as the point of aspiration that all of these bands seem to be reaching for. It's pop punk—in 2012…late 2012, at that. SHARED ARMS, however (comma), are easier to read. True, it's dead-ahead pop punk in the same relative vein of PREVENGE, but there are little nuances to pick up on. For instance, the singers' rasps definitely recall '80s power ballads at their most heart wrenching, as does the guitar lead over the outro. The overall sound vaguely brings to mind SYSTEM OF A DOWN's big radio hit from when I was in middle school. (LP)
(Guerilla Asso / Juice Box / Pavones / Struggletown / Tragicomedy)

PROTOMARTYR – "Colpi Proibiti" EP

This is hard, nearly impossible, not to like. The guitar isn't necessarily angular or off kilter, but it's still dynamic and interesting and evocative of the FALL. The guitar parts and the moodiness of the vocals have a post-punk quality to them. The songs don't *sound* like the DEAD MILKMEN, but they have that simple, incredibly catchy fun quality to them that is characteristic of a band like the DEAD MILKMEN. I could see this band having a broad appeal that would stretch from fans of straight-ahead garage pop punk like GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE to fans of post-punk bands like the FALL or JOY DIVISION to other X! Records bands like TYVEK. Very good. (P$)
(X!)

PUFFY AREOLAS – "1982: Dishonorable Discharge" LP

I've really enjoyed all of this band's records, but I predict that this LP will be the one that kicks things over into obsession mode, particularly for the legit punks in the audience. They cut the bullshit on *1982: Dishonorable Discharge* and go straight for the dirty, delinquent rock-obsessed asshole in all of us. It's a tremendous mess of STOOGES worship, with most tunes employing a truly fucked groove to send you foaming and flailing around whatever bedroom or barroom you happen to be inhabiting while it plays. Fans of Midwestern weirdo punk must procure this LP immediately. (MC)
(HoZac)

PVP – "Miedo" LP

I do not regularly put reissues or represses in my top ten, but this is going in. The first LP of this Spanish band from 1982. Definitely punk, with new wave sounds including synths, cool weird timing and post punk experimentation. The comparison to the RUTS is truly justified here. Every song on here is interesting and different, but with a cohesive sound. The guitars are flanged and there are gloomy moments, but this is punk through and through without being super poppy, while super fucking catchy. The lyrics are about the bomb, war, big business and themes that still fuel punks to fight to this day. There is a reggae-influenced song that is reminiscent to the punk hybrid as presented by the CLASH (another common comparison, but the influence is undeniably there). It is all more punk than experimental and a good window into the transition that punk was making at the time. I'm so stoked that is now widely available and you should be too! (MB)
(Beat Generation)

QUATTRO STAGIONI – "Discography 1998-2008" CD

It turns out I discovered this German band a bit too late. I got a chance to hear their self-titled LP in 2008. At the time I couldn't find any info on the band, I just knew I liked their take on grindcore/powerviolence/fastcore. On this discography CD you get 58 tracks including their LP, a split with IRON LUNG, the demo and some live tracks. The music sounds outright crazy and schizophrenic. One minute they sound like fast punk and the next the drummer starts playing super fast with tons of blasts. The live tracks are terribly recorded but that's somehow OK. I still don't know anything about the band except I think their name is a type of Italian pizza. (MH)
(Regurgitated Semen)

RADICAL DISCHARGE – "Sent Down the Line/Lawyers Don't Surf"

We get a mixed bag from this Baltimore band. The A-side starts things off in fine punk/metal crossover style with speedy drums, raging solos and a nasty chorus. The B-side hops on the goofy party bus for less spectacular results that include a chorus about surfing lawyers as well as dueling IRON MAIDEN guitar solos. Needless to say, that's when I turned the record off. I hope they stick with the former style next time around. (JH)
(Wall Ride)

RÄTTENS KRATER – "Stora Stöten" EP

Woah, this is great! Catchy, full-sounding but raw mid-tempo Swedish punk rock. The ideas and structures are simple, but the hooks are there and the vocals are really strong. There're also these weird keyboard lines that really fill out each song and make them unique. Seriously all six songs each have their own special "treat" lurking inside. This record is limited to 300, so don't delay! (MA)
(Republiken Bergslagen Grammofon)

RATTUS – "Rajoitettu Ydinsota" EP

Finnish legends' scorcher from 1982. This is the shit that pretty much defines Finnish hardcore, and as much as I hate to live in the past (in fact, I hate it so much that I choose to live in the present instead), this just smokes 95% of the hardcore coming out today. Broken down—it's catchy punk ramped up to light speed with vocals that just roll over the top, but drop the needle on this slab and you can instantly hear something else lurking—an absolute insistence that is too often lacking. Some records are legendary because people think they are cool, others are legendary because they are just that good. (WN)
(Queer Pills)

RED DONS – "Ausländer/Mauvaise Foi"

What to say first about the RED DONS—that they're one of my favourite current bands, that the cover features some pretty deep sayings in my native language, that I saw them live twice in a week and got high on the sound and energy, that they're all great people and do what they do with purity and passion, or that above and beyond all that their actual music is spine-chillingly consuming? This EP breaks in, rolling down the dusty road they took a few years ago and seemingly never looked back, and with cuts and bruises acquired along the way, they continue with torches blazing, unstoppable and determined in the knowledge that sometimes you have to get lost first, to find out where it is you were supposed to be all along—caught between two worlds, transfixed by an unbreakable duality. This time adding ever more despairing vocals (that actually gave me that '80s, bittersweet Morrissey feeling at times), guitars that sound like heartbreak and drumming that delightfully pounds on my brain, like a mantra that keeps me sane. "Suddenly I figure out that I'm lost and won't be found. I keep a little piece of where I'm from […] in my pocket if I can […] and it's all I've ever known, 'cause I'm never coming home"—poetic genius that captures the weird sadness of displacement which no doubt many punks can relate to. On the flip, we delve into religious paranormal activity, righteous eyes 'searching for the sound of sweet salvation' by way of talking in tongues. The clapping is effective and while this is not as lethally, painstakingly brilliant as "Ausländer", it's still a RED DONS classic, set with layered guitar work, pulsating drums, melodic cries and mystic lyrics. "Deceived by the future, restless for the present and hostile towards the past," the RED DONS are really eliminating boarders both literally and metaphorically with their music and aesthetic, elevating in my mind to a level higher than most bands. I wish more bands would channel their unique worldly existences into their music; it really could lead punk away from trendyfied copycattyness and into a new age of sonic enlightenment… Let the music lay heavy on your soul, for truth is no easy burden to bear. On this planet we are all Ausländer. (LA)
(Dirtnap)

RINGWORM – "Stigmatas in the Flesh" LP

OK, look…I have a soft spot for completely ignorant mosh hardcore. I'll cop to it. In my younger years, I attended at least one Superbowl of Hardcore, rocked the *Firestorm* EP on the regular and wore out the grooves of the ALL OUT WAR LP. Haven't revisited the style much in the last ten years or so, but I do have fond memories

of Cleveland's own RINGWORM (who I always secretly thought were better than INTEGRITY in the Clevo metallic HC stakes) and this live LP plays like a greatest hits that takes me right back. The recording is totally pro, on par with SLAYER's *Decade of Aggression* though without as much hilariously goofy stage banter (well, some of it is pretty goofy). Double-kicks, chug riffs, pinch harmonics and some of the meanest vocals in the business abound. I have to admit, it gets a little same-y by about halfway through the B-side, but I'm sure this'll be priceless to fans and it's not a bad starting point for people new to the band either. (AU)
(A389)

ROTTING PALMS – "Greetings from the Nile" EP

I don't know if there's something in the water down there, but everyone I know from Florida is fucking nuts and I think about that as I listen to this band. The music is sludgy metal with a heavy and lethargic feel to it. There are some melodic guitar parts, but mostly it's brutal chugs with hanging notes and fucked up sounding timing. The sound is stony, but oppressive and angry—the sort of band where you see a loaded dude headbutt the stage on accident at their show. That dude might be me. (BL)
(IFB)

SATANIC ROCKERS – "Eviction/Rat Versus Boredom" EP

Christ, remember when you couldn't read a page of boring music reviews by idiots without pissing yourself laughing at the praise heaped upon any group that couldn't play and sang with that tinny accent? I know you can—it was only a month ago. I was bewildered; having actually been to Australia, I know that every band sounds like the worst version of the SWELL MAPS you could ever encounter and this group is no different. Melody-free heavy metal swill for stoned art students who hang out with their roommates. I have a pretty big head, yet I can't wrap it around the fact that almost none of these bands have hooks yet so many people buy the records. Trust me—I learned the hard way that you can't get by on just being abrasive. (BB)
(Quemada)

SCHOOL JERKS – LP

I'll admit to being hesitant to embrace this band because of my dislike of their singer. After seeing him make a complete and humorless slob of himself at a few shows, I'd pretty much lost interest until a couple months ago, when I caught their record release show in a sweaty Toronto basement. As I watched a throng of young Canadian punks moshing their minds out, it became increasingly clear these guys are doing more than a few things right. The songs are impeccably written, the guitar leads are nasty, the drumming is killer and I even begrudgingly agreed that his voice is the perfectly snotty cherry on top. If you have a place in your heart for WASTED YOUTH, early FLAG and other aggro beach punk classics, this is the record of the year, hands down. Favorite line: "Fuck everybody…literally." (JH)
(Grave Mistake)

SEDATIVES – "Teenage Runaway/Fascists"

The SEDATIVES' self-titled LP was a great record and personal favourite, full of catchy hooks, sing-along choruses, dark harmonies and youthful despair. On this 45 they release two tracks originally written in 2009. Infectious and anthemic punk rock, the church organ expands over everything to add a doomsday effect to their sound. On the A-side, "Teenage Runaway" is rolling, danceable punk at its best—for those nights when you hate everyone and you need a song on repeat to skip town to. On the flip, "Fascists" potentially describes what said teenage runaway is actually running from. You'll like this band out if you like to dance your arse off at gigs (not mosh, *dance*!), or if you have anxiety for breakfast and want non-prescription SEDATIVES. Can't wait for their next LP! (LA)
(Erste Theke Tonträger / Red Lounge)

SETIEMBREONCE / SIN ORDEN – split EP

This is my first time experiencing the Uruguayan thrash of SETIEMBREONCE, and boy does it shred! Chi-town veterans SIN ORDEN offer up some really strong tracks here as well! Both sides are excellent, interesting, fast, catchy, fucking pissed, have thoughtful lyrics (printed in English and Spanish) and this thing just fucking rips from beginning to end. It's hard to pull off a solid split where one side doesn't outweigh the other. This is a perfect pair-up—do not miss! (MA)
(Punks Before Profit)

SICK FIX – "Vexed" LP

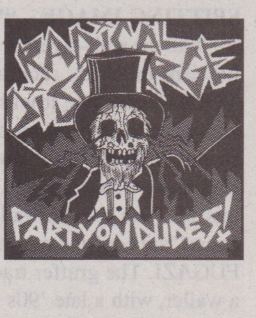
Dark hardcore from a straight edge point of view, with hard, fast drumming and riffs that would make my younger, more powerviolency, grindy self very stoked. Intense doesn't really come close to describing how this record made me feel. Michelle's vocals are broad in range, and they fit the music perfectly, as both elements are pissed as fuck sounding. This recording is definitely more on the raw side, and very reminiscent of hardcore greats INFEST when it comes to intensity, song structure and metallic undertones. I have no doubt in my mind this band kills live. For fans of moshing, being pissed and intense, contemporary hardcore. (KR)
(A398)

SNAKE RUN – LP

I've praised this short-lived band's tape since it came out in 2004 and I'm super excited that it was finally pressed to vinyl, given that they never recorded anything else. The sound here is pretty unique, with a wide range of hardcore influence effectively fused together, and doesn't really sound like anything else. The drums have a swinging groove to them that's somewhat like a sped-up UNDERDOG, both the recording and guitar tone are thick and unpolished and the vocals are pissed and raspy, in a Choke-channeling-Henry-Rollins sort of way, and call out things that suck, including positivity as a substitute for rational thought, as well as religious infiltration of hardcore, which sadly was a big problem in the Northwest when this tape originally came out. A couple of songs are more straightforward 1-2-1-2 hardcore stompers, while others throw in '70s rock via BLACK FLAG-type guitar leads and jam-outs. This band I believe existed for less than a year and the members later fled Bellingham, WA, and went on to be in CONDOMINIUM, BLACK BREATH and VACANT STATE. This vinyl treatment may be six or seven years overdue, but better late than never. (DG)
(Bedside)

SOUNDING ROCKETS – "Unenviable" EP

This is one of those 7"s that I can totally see why someone would want to put this band out, but you really wished they had gotten it right before they recorded it. SOUNDING ROCKETS are a band that is sort of all over the place, but not in a SCREAMING FEMALES or SCHLONG type of



way, but more in the "lack an identity on record" type of way. I hear elements of power pop, surf and C86 mixed into three of the four tracks on this EP and then the other one "Hyperkinetic" has a strong BAD RELIGION feel. Overall this lends to a very uneven record that wouldn't rate much time on my turntable, but SOUNDING ROCKETS do show enough potential that I am gonna try and remember their name down the road. (JF)
(Wall Ride)

SPITTING IMAGE – "Valley Floor" EP

Take the well-layered, chaos-to-their-madness lyricism of bands such as FUGAZI or SONIC YOUTH, combine it with some neat fingerwork and warm distortion on bass, add some gloomy shades of early '80s newave and brazen anarchopunk guitar work and you have the B-side of this EP. The spoken/wailed lyrics on "Negative Space" are cool and reminiscent of Picciotto from FUGAZI. The gruffer track on side A is more of a wailer, with a late '90s feel of indie decadence and self-pity—"with nothing left to inspire nothing glows." This track could do without the one, sort of metal growl midway, but the driving guitars and nihilistic-sounding vocals maintain their gloomy hold on me and I too 'just want the mania to grow.' Sympathy for the detail indeed, an interesting addition to the already growing sector of gloomy, guitar-based bands. Bands that make me want to stay locked in my room for a month, smoking and drinking and remembering/writing about my degenerate teenage atrocities. I like! (LA)
(Negative Space Extensions)

STANDING ON A FLOOR OF BODIES – "Sacrilegious & Culturally Deficient" LP

It didn't take five seconds for the music on this one-sided 12" to start ripping my flesh off. STANDING ON A FLOOR OF BODIES is a one- or two-piece (I can't tell) Bay Area grindcore band that contains at the very least Mike from THOUSANDSWILLDIE. It does sound like there is another vocalist who I think is Bvnny Stitches. And they have created a brutal grindcore record with slight death metal leanings without guitar. Toss in a bunch of noise and chaos and you get STANDING ON A FLOOR OF BODIES. Listening to it, it's hard to believe some of those sounds aren't a guitar. Feo (MAN AMONG WOLVES/ARISE/OLD CROW) and Pete (BENUMB/AGENDA OF SWINE) do guest vocal spots. Off to hunt down the band's demos. (MH)
(7 Degrees)

STATE FUNERAL – "Protest Music" EP

The cover of this EP is similar to NOTA's classic "No U-Turns" logo, except Cardiff's STATE FUNERAL have replaced the U-turn with a "No Right Turns" sign. While politics have largely become gauche in the US hardcore scene, they never vacated European punk and hardcore. The interesting lyrical twist prevalent in this EP—as much of current in European hardcore in general—is the political shift within Europe (as well as the most of the Western world) to defend the basic role of government as a community provider of health care and education and a general welfare state against the conservative elements of society and the wealthy trying to dismantle the basic agreed-upon societal structures that helped lift both the US and Europe out of extreme poverty after the devastations of the Great Depression and Great Wars. It's a scary time, as basically the obscenely wealthy are waging battles to dismantle the societal safety nets the world over. Three of the six tracks on this EP—including the band's great theme song—touch on those ideas, and the music is straightforward verbiage-driven hardcore, as if you took DEAD SILENCE and pushed them down a BLACK FLAG path, so there's more artful touches in the guitar playing and delivery than heavy-handed plodded delivery. Bonus points for a subtle *Night of the Living Dead* intro sample, download code and patch! (KS)
(Artcore, no address)

STELLAR CORPSES – "Dead Start Drive-In" CD

This Santa Cruz band sounds a lot like recent TIGER ARMY, maybe a little AFI too. Stand-up bass slapping the rock pop punk. OK for what it is I guess, but I don't like TIGER ARMY or this. (RL)
(Santa Carla)

SUNDOWNERS – "Can You Help Me Put My Thai On?" EP

The first song on this record starts off with a cool, noodle-y guitar part that is reminiscent of ALGERNON CADWALLADER, but unfortunately it only lasts a couple seconds and nothing like it appears on the record again. Instead, you end up with mid- to up-tempo anthemic pop punk with gruff, sung vocals and some moments of catchy dual-guitar work. On the whole, it sounds as much like DILLINGER FOUR as it does most of the stuff that makes it onto the Art of the Underground Singles Series. (PA)
(Brain Box / Dirt Cult)

SURGEONS – "Whip Them Lord/In My Scope"

Wow, this is a weird month. I don't think I am in a particularly good mood and yet this is my third 7" review and the third *good* 7" review. This *never* happens. SURGEONS are excellent. I might compare this to some of the more recent Aussie noisy weird punk shit—it's got a similar super heavy, burly, thugged-out punk sound, but super aggro punk, plus some keyboards shit. Or like '70s Aussie BODYSNATCHERS style. Fuck, I googled them. I guess they're from Los Angeles. (GB)
(Total Punk)

SURROUNDED BY THIEVES – "Prophecies of Greed" CD

Melodic hardcore à la STRIKE ANYWHERE and BAD RELIGION here. This Las Vegas band isn't breaking any new ground and the vocals seem a little off, but the songs are catchy and full of social commentary. They mix it up a bit with a few slow type songs and a parody of SUICIDAL's "Institutionalized." Good in this very populated genre but not top notch just yet. (RL)
(Suburban Tree)

SURROUNDED BY THIEVES – "Punk Rock Fight Songs" CD

Five-track CD of good ol' driving hardcore, as epitomized by an early 7 SECONDS cover that rounds it all of. Plenty of brains and guts (though remarkably little baldness), driving melodies and anguished vocals. Politically, they're firmly in the right (i.e. left) place. They might not be reaching for their revolver, but they're heading off into the proper territory, with enough melody in the abrasive snot to bring back memories of mid-period PROPAGANDHI. One could certainly do a lot worse. (RK)
(Suburban Tree)

SYNTAX ERROR – "Syntax Error" EP

It just comes off as really lazy and obvious to me when synth punk bands spend all their time talking about being robots or wanting to be robots—it's just kind of cheesy. This band lands in the stilted territory as ADULT. But it's not terrifying like ADULT. There's definitely some influence from the UNITS happening, or almost the NORMAL but with more of a basement punk feeling rather than a cold, lonely apartment feeling. The vocals manage to stay in this void space between totally monotone and freaking out that is just totally frustrating. I kind of just wish this was a little weirder, a little more skrunky, less into future techno imagery. (MM)
(Rerun)

TELEPATH BOYS – "Uri Geller" CD

Overproduced "high energy" bar punk from Castellón, Spain. I guess they are named after a ZEKE song, so that should give you an idea of what this sounds like. Fans of "punk rock'n'roll" might be into this. Is "punk rock'n'roll" even a thing? I don't even know... (TM)
(Rumble / Punk Machine)

THINK TWICE – "Deficit Youth" EP

Fuck yeah, this band is dumb as shit. England's THINK TWICE plays tight, fast NYHC worship à la STRAIGHT AHEAD or newer bands like Boston's FREE SPIRIT, but faster and dumber sounding. I love shit like this. Six songs, short and sweet, with tight mosh breaks all over the place—and they even bust out with a BEYOND cover. Hardcore still rules, no doubt. (TM)
(Anger Battery)

THE UNWED TEENAGE MOTHERS – "If You Think You're Lonely Now" EP

Yo, I don't know why this 7" was assigned to me, 'cause I only like third-rate MERAUDER clones, but this shit is actually pretty tight. These are four songs of fuzzy, garage-y power pop that

is so catchy that I listened to this 7" twice. Clean production, but fuzzed-out at times, and the songs are actually really well written. Someone in this band is also in the band BASS DRUM OF DEATH, but I don't know what that is? Solid EP, hopefully this band gets hella famous. (TM)
(Speakertree)

URBAN WASTE – "Police Brutality" EP

Because you 1) Are interested in hardcore, and 2) Reading *MRR* as opposed to the Bridge Nine message board, I don't need to tell you what this sounds like, or that it's one of the best records to ever come out of NYC. I wish they hadn't gone with a silver-on-black for the sleeve colors, and there are some minor tweaks of the back cover and insert—when I prefer reissues to stay as faithful as possible to the originals—but the aesthetic of the original recording hasn't been fucked with and this is your chance to own a band-authorized reissue of this EP, and without a pixilated cover at that. (DG)
(Even Worse / Way Back When)

THE URGES – "Psych Ward" CD

This is the most straight-up dirty garage SONICS, STANDELLS, SEEDS shit I've got to review in a while. I took a hit of acid with some dust just to get in the mood and these guys are really grooving. Riots in the streets. Fucking! I think drugs or not, you should stumble to your local record store and buy this. It's the real deal. (RO)
(Off the Hip)

UTAH JAZZ – "Lookin' Like Howwywood" EP

This is really good. There's my review. Oh, OK—members of MAYDAY! and BROWN SUGAR playing bratty punk that reminds me of the REZILLOS, the MONORCHID and some UK DIY tape-only release from 1981 all combined and played at top volume at some basement party rager. There is flute! But it doesn't sound like JETHRO TULL. And the girl who sang for MAYDAY! can *sing*, so there is *singing* on this, as well as desperate frantic yelling. The title track is a manic instrumental, like the FALL on more speed than usual. This veers between vicious punk garage and psyche-troglodytes, sort of *Nuggets*-like for the people who buy their *MRR* at the head shop. (LG)
(Feral Kid / Media Schlitz)

VEKTOR – "Edition Edition" EP

Side A of this Japanese band's EP is slow, boring indie-rock that sounds like it was written while they were watching an Ikea commercial. It's truly awful. Also, if you're listening to it on headphones (like I am now), the recording consistently pans from the right headphone to the left and back again for the entirety of the song, making for a completely annoying listening experience. Who's terrible idea was this? Side B sounds like GAUNT when they jumped onto a major label. This shit sucks. (GH)
(MCR)

VIHARIKOS – "Oravanpyora Yha Uudestaan..." EP

A perfunctory seven-song EP of rumbly hardcore with a big, boxy, open-room-styled recording that tempers the speed and typically commanding caustic upfront vocals of the classic RIISTEYT-ish Finnish hardcore that this Tampere band VIHARIKOS ("Hate Crime") plays. With a little drawback in the drum sound and a flatter, '80s recording, these tracks would punch harder. There's one unique slow dirge with howling vocals that breaks into stop-and-start thrash, but most tracks are a minute and a half or less, fairly predictable blasts of solid 'n' punky Finnish hardcore. The songs are good for the style, and fans of the sound—as well as fans of the venerable Fight label that has come out of near-retirement with this release—should seek this out. The packaging is much more all over the place: translated, the lyrics are about trendy shit-talking punks, government power, the uselessness of religion; the thanks list similarly rails against "trendie spoiled pussys and have nothing to do with punk or hardcore" and "PC conformist cunts." Oh dear, you never know who might be wanting to get into your records a continent or three away! Who *else* do you think mostly collects records besides all the "trendie spoiled pussys"!? The cover features a picture of the drummer bench curling, the singer passed out and then the front is a cartoon pencil drawing of a robot with a comic *2000 AD*-ish slogan "Obey Your Local Robopope or Die!" (KS)
(Fight)

VILIPEND – "Inamorata" LP

Elements of CABLE, DEADGUY and that whole discordant corner of the '90s metallic hardcore mix with the slower, droning blasse parts of the last three CONVERGE albums on this LP, which I think is the debut full-length from this Canadian band, following up a 7". Good stuff if those bands I mentioned suit your interests. I, however, have moved on. (JU)
(A389)

VOX POP – "Cab Driver/Just Like Your Mom"

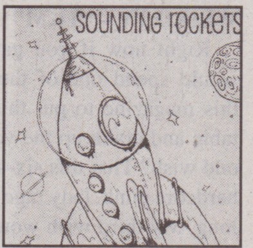
Failed melodies coupled with bratty lyrics like VOM. The riffs are fuzzed and repetitive with just enough moments of lazy fuck-arounds; the melodies are the kind of wrecked new wave style. DEAD BOYS slowed down with the bratty turned down but the sloppiness intact. Featuring a rather shiny cast of characters including Don Bolles and Jeff Dahl. They sound like the place and era that they are from and it's really, really cool. (MM)
(Munster)

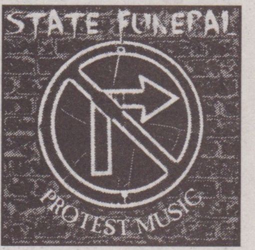
THE WANKYS – "Knock One Out" CD

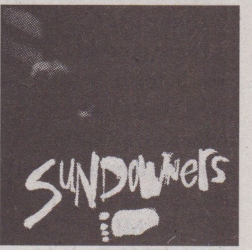
You know, I've heard the criticism of the WANKYS: "Oh, they're just a rip-off band, they're not original, etc..." and I've never bought it for a second. Yeah, they have pretty clear influences, but there is no band, past or present, that sounds quite like these manic British squires. Between Mr. Wanky's unmistakable voice and ridiculous singular guitar tone, the frenetic melodic bass lines and the drumming that's perpetually poised on the edge of a precipice, there's just no mistaking the WANKYS for any other band. This newest full-length just reinforces that point. "Knock One Out" finds these wizened old fuckers experimenting with crazy, almost psych-influenced "wah" solos, nutty tossed-off joke songs and a greater variety of tempos—evidence that the quality time they spent with CHAOS CHANNEL on tour rubbed off at least a little. Despite compiling an incredibly solid discography, I feel like the WANKYS are often overlooked in favor of the latest batch of young 'uns who've picked up the noize-core style. Hopefully that changes with this release, which is easily their best to date. As I understand it, there's vinyl to come as well if import CDs aren't your thing. (AU)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

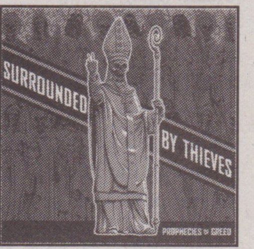
WASTED – "The Early Years EP's 1998-2002" LP

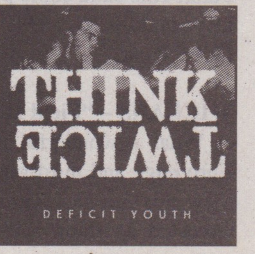
I'm not familiar with this band but it's pretty damn good. They're from Finland; looking at the idiot box (internet)











I see they've been round for more than fifteen years so I'm an idiot for not hearing them sooner. They're very British-sounding with songs ranging from Oi! to hardcore to old SoCal punk like the ADOLESCENTS. I prefer the earlier stuff as it's a little more smashing-beer-bottles rough. Some of the songs get a little too poppy sing-along for me but there's a shit ton of material on here and it's more good than bad. (RO)
(Combat Rock Industry)

WEIRD TV – "TKM" 12"

Right now if you gave me three wishes, I would spend one of them on crawling out of this magazine to put this record on your turntable and crank up the volume myself. My second wish? That this six-song EP of intoxicating hardcore punk, lady rage possessed was twice as long. My third wish would be to find the words to describe what happens to my brain when I come home to this record after a day of swallowing shit from every motherfucker that wants to say something to me, of muttering under my breath instead of spitting in their faces—of tuning out until the roar of bullshit is a din of white noise and dull nerves. WEIRD TV is a hex on every poser; it's what's getting me through. Resist psychic death—yes!—but not alone. No future 2012—yes!—but not motherfucking alone. (FF)
(Perennial)

WHITE COFFIN – "Before the Cut" CD

Gothy rock'n'roll punk from LA. These guys are probably 20 years late for the LA glam crowd, but they would have fit right in when all those bands had a look and claimed to be punk-influenced. Still this is OK for what it is. I'm guessing they are more of a bar band than an up-and-coming thing in LA punk. Their influences run from MISFITS to SISTERS OF MERCY to MINISTRY. Probably wouldn't be a bad band to see on a slow night, just make sure you wear black. (RL)
(self-released)

WHITE WIRES – "Crazy/I Need Your Love"

A-side is a catchy love song from these Canadian garage popsters. On the flip they pay tribute to the POPPEES, one of the progenitors of the powerpop sound that gives the WHITE WIRES their *raison d'etre*. (They're Canadian, they'll get that.) While it's well done, it's lacking in edge for a record on a label called Total Punk. This band could play at the Fonz's Happy Days pizza party. (AM)
(Total Punk)

WICCANS – "Field II" LP

What a wonderful relief from all the shit Euro edge and third-rate metalcore I got to review this month…*jeezus chrrrrrist*. Not that I expected anything sub-amazing from this LP, but they really raised the bar of "interesting" with this 12". Thanks in great part to the ridiculous tightness of the drummer, the syncopation and chord changes all feel so natural that you almost forget you're hearing something new and fresh with no peer, no precedent and no chance of redundancy. The clean guitars flow *seamlessly* between these faster, thrashing, classic hardcore riffs; to more rockin' parts; to pretty, chiming leads; to heavy thunderous recoils; and to anywhere and everywhere in between. I am not gonna say that this sounds anything at all like *My War*-and-beyond FLAG, but I think it's worth mentioning, because this record fully embodies that spirit that I think Greg was going for in melding a psychedelic approach to hardcore punk, taking chances and pushing boundaries to where the end result is like nothing anyone has ever heard before, and things get real cosmic there at the end. Fuck, do I wanna see this band live. (JU)
(Hardware / Katorga Works)

WILD MOHICANS – "Police Violence/ Drunk Alone"

These songs have been stuck in my head since first listen. Think early FUCKED UP, if they were from Portland and did *a lot* of drugs—in a good way. "Drunk Alone" is an anthem for every 20-something waster punk, having a similar effect as POISON IDEA's "Painkiller" had on my brain, but not as technical. These two tracks are lengthy, powerful and heavy, with punchy riffs and melodic leads. I recommend you pick this up. (KR)
(self-released)

ZOOBOMBS – "The Ultimate Collection" CD

I guess this is some kind of best-of for this Japanese band that seems to have been around since the early '90s, and supported JOHN SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION and FLAMING LIPS on US tours. They are still going and are playing less salubrious but no doubt sweaty shows. I confess to never having heard of them until now. Their style is energetic over-the-top jazzy funk rock with lots of wah-wah and Hammond organ. I can get into this kind of thing from the original era but I'm not sure I need this homage to it. Maybe you do. (AM)
(self-released)

V/A – "A Four Way Split" EP

Four-way attack of West Coastal no wavers and art punkers. SOFT SHOULDER starts this out with a disjointed 99 Records-styled screed featuring the dreamy Anna Nasty of VEGETABLE on guest vocals—it's a total jam. ORANGE COAX plays and I am reminded of SILVER DAGGERS' skronk style. NO BABIES are Bay Area heartthrobs and play fully charged no wave hardcore destrukktion with out-for-blood vocals courtesy of Jasmine who also plays in NEO CONS. Music for people that know the words to VOID songs and KLEENEX ones, too. The last band, BUSY LIGHTS, were not quite my "thing" as they say—very math-y with thick Mike Watt-ish bass, it reminded me of late-'90s HC kids discovering music existed outside of their highwatered pants world. In general, however, this is a refreshing and exciting demonstration of bands that are making DIY music on their own terms in regards to sound and ideas as well as ideals. If you like your punk with a side of art and wish that TEENAGE JESUS were playing your high school dance, grab this shit OK!? (LG)
(Gilgongo)

V/A – "One H.E.L.L. of a Compilation" 2xLP

The genres on this double-LP are all over the map, from emotional hardcore and acoustic balladry to indie rock and bad bedroom projects; from mosh-metal and punk to other stuff that defies categorization. Some of the bands on here are CONVERGE, PAINT IT BLACK, FOXFIRES, JASON ANDERSON and ATTICA! ATTICA! Out of all the bands on here, I only like ROADRAGE with their spastic, frenzied attack on DIY punk. That being said, this record was made for a great cause. The proceeds will go towards benefitting H.E.L.L., which is a non-profit that gives out free bike helmets and raises awareness of bike safety. The program was started after two friends passed away in bike accidents in Boston. Having lost friends in this same way, I see the importance of having these kinds of programs and I wish them the best in their efforts. (GH)
(Get Stoked)

V/A – TURIST I TILLVARON Vol. 4 – "Därför Att Svensk Punk Aldrig Låtit Bättre" LP

Wow! This fourth (!) *Turist I Tillvaron* compilation in a year starts off with a never-before-released—pre-MOB 47—SPEEDY SNAILS song from 1981! Then DESPERAT crash in with their raw and noisy hardcore attack! Fuck yeah! These comps really are a great peak into Swedish punk and every one contains a diverse mix. Here we have a selection of melodic punk, catchy femme garage, St.Pauli-infused dirty thrash'n'roll, noisy dark D-beat, weirdo dakrwave, folk punk, straight hardcore, street punk and more! Notable bands this time around include DIN SKEVF, LE MUHR, MAKABERT FYND, VÅLDSAMT MOSTÅND, AGGRENATION and of course DESPERAT. This comes in a full-colour gatefold cover with info and pictures, which helps offer some insight into each band. Perhaps not as good as some of their previous comps; still, this is a great effort so cheers to everyone involved! (LA)
(Turist I Tillvaron)

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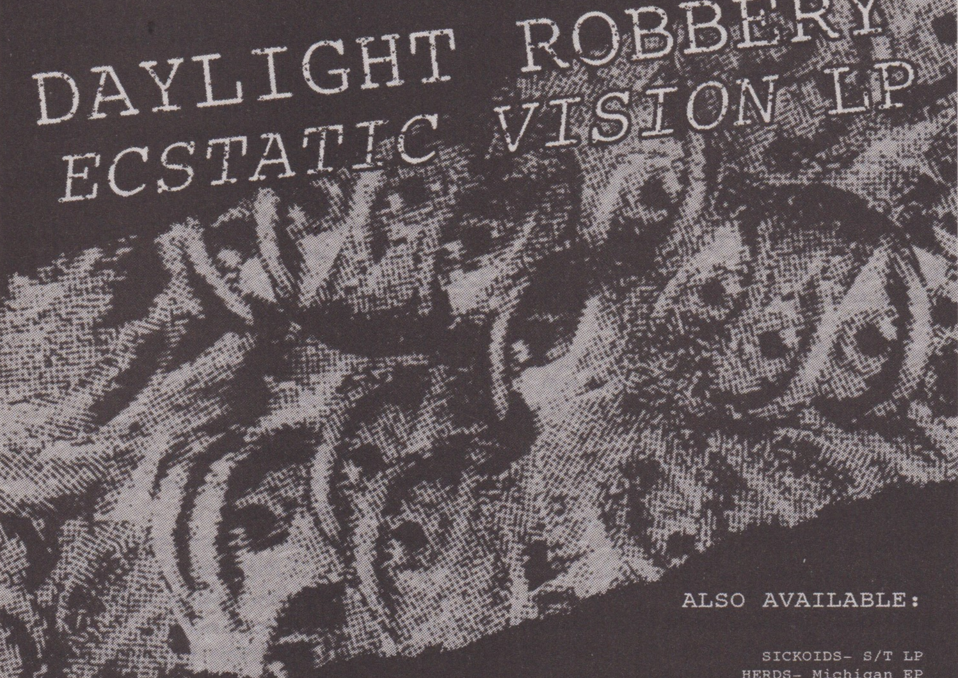

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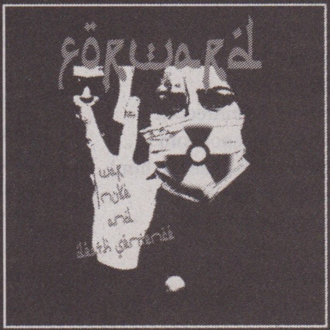

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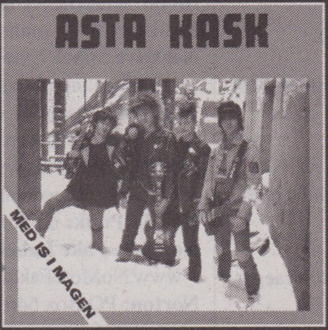

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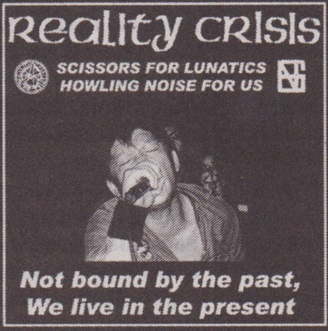

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Amelia Eakins and Jeremy Meier.

ABERGAZ – *Minimalizam Megalomanije* – Man, this tape is a huge breath of fresh air after reviewing so many predictable, stock, privileged bands—many of which are good, but simply lack the honesty, wit, intelligence and passion that ABERGAZ demonstrates with this tape. On a first blind listen, the music is slickly recorded melodic hardcore punk with dramatically howled vocals and some weird parts—the closest comparison I can make would be Slovakian hardcore punk veterans DAVOVA PSYCHOZA—but I think many people looking for something familiar would struggle relating to this. Am I being unfair to and judgmental about you, punks? Anyways, ABERGAZ is from Zagreb, Croatia, and they are very expressive about what it means to be different (a punk) in a part of the world that has been divided into different countries by war, causing folks to be born with hostile mentalities toward neighboring regions. The four-panel fold out tape inner translates and explains in English the meanings of all seventeen of their songs. I keep trying to choose some of the great topics they sing about to give you an idea, but it's so hard to pick just a few, and I just can't type 'em all here, so I really urge you to track this down and fucking get into it and connect with it. Don't just download it, fucking write them and connect with them and get the whole package the way it was meant to be, and interact with it. Support genuine punks who put three years of effort and all of their energy and money into releasing this. This is the kind of shit that gets me pumped about reviewing new, unknown punk music. Or hell, just pumped to engage in an international punk network where we can share our stories and ideas, support, relate to, and learn from each other. Okay, I think I've made myself clear here—put away your INFERNOH or HOAX record for a minute and spend a little time on ABERGAZ. (Matt) (17-song cassette, lyrics included, abergazpunk@gmail.com, Davor Njec Hranjec, Josipa Hatzea 41, 10110 Zagreb, CROATIA)

ANGRY GODS – *Concrete Distortion* – Four tracks of pummeling, dark, mid-tempo excellence. This demo sounds like the love child between KYLESA, BRAINOIL, and SLEEP. Doomy powerful riffs with hard-hitting drums and anguished vocals. This is not your "run of the mill" stuff here...no no...This is good—total Doom-laden sludge with a hint of hardcore. This five-piece band pulls this style off quite nicely. Chicago area, make sure you check them out! Have no doubt that their live show is devastating. Grab this demo! (Jeremy) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, crippledsoundrecords@gmail.com)

CASTRATO ATTACK GROUP / ETAI KESHIKI – *split* – ETAI KESHIKI does seven tracks of unsettling, herky-jerky '90s experimental screamo hardcore sometimes bringing CHARLES BRONSON or GUYANA PUNCHLINE to mind, but that's being generous. Add a strobe light to this and it's sure to give you a seizure. CAG does a nearly twenty minute instrumental jam sesh and I'm sure now that this tape just isn't for me. Both bands are from Leeds. (Matt)(8-song cassette, lyrics included, etaikeshiki@hotmail.com)

CISMA – This band is like a hybrid of all the bands on *Bloodstains Across Spain*. CISMA has the best bass riffs, frustrated EU'S ARSE-like vocals, punk rock guitar and simple drums. They feel very late '70s punk but with the aggression and frustration of '80s anarcho punk. They are political, heartfelt and honest. This tape took effort and it shows—this is a well thought out array of ten solid songs on a two-sided tape. As it was described in the letter accompanying this cassette, "it's our humble effort against the system." Anarchy and Peace indeed, this tape is a must have for all punks! (Amelia) (10-song demo, lyrics in Spanish included, with fold-out poster, Alta Intensidaz Tape, Teodoro Hernandez, C/ El Campo 4, Las Mercedes 38293, La Laguna, Tenerife, SPAIN. cismapunk@gmail.com)

DEADNECKS (MT) – *Tales From Ghost Town* – Real cow-punk with some meth induced charm! The vocals on this CD are pretty wacky and remind me of UNITED MUTATION at some parts. Really nice guitar work including acoustic guitar... But wait! There are also some crazy Banjo solos going on here! It's safe to say these are some talented individuals. If I had to compare this to anything, maybe to just give you better perspective, it would have to be the VANDALS "Urban Struggle", but with some true Billings, MT cow-punk heart and soul. (Jeremy)(8-song CD-R, no lyrics included, Scratch Native records, PO Box 7009, Bozeman, MT, 59771)

DRIPFED – *Unit B sessions* – Second release from this political crust/grind quintet from the swing state of Colorado. The tape kicks off with a dirge bringing DYSTOPIA to mind, but grinds and thrashes plenty throughout the other tracks. Complex structures and a strong woman vocalist help make DRIPFED a force to be reckoned with. Not my cup of tea, but that doesn't make it any less potent. (Matt) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, dripfedpunk@gmail.com)

DRUG LUST – If I'm gonna guess, at least one member has been on a message board and this band has been accused of being "mysterious guy hardcore" several times. These guys are really into themselves. It's OK, so am I. Really—no judgment here. And no hard feelings, I dig this tape for what it is. DRUG LUST has the darkness and lo-fi sound of DARKTHRONE's "Frostland Tapes" mixed with that totally rocking, reverbed to hell, gonna bleed all over you and make a scene evil feel like a late era GG fronted VENOM. Wait—what's that I see...did you doodle runes under your band name? What are you, eleven? A goth band? You boys think you can hack it being reckless and blatantly taking drugs and die by 27, rock stars? Got bittersweet news for you, you'll probably just wind up in a twelve-step program instead of dead and bloated before your time. And just to say, we already watched that dude from HOAX batter his head incessantly every show. We get it, self abuse is cool and makes for a good show. It's passé now. And real men don't wear masks. (Amelia) ($3, several songs, no lyrics, poster included, Drug Lust, 820 Meuon Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15206, villegas66Q@gmail.com, Society Bleed records)

FREEDOM CLUB – *Rather be Blind* – Portland, Oregon ,breeding grounds for bands like the OBSERVERS, RED DONS and DEFECT DEFECT. FREEDOM CLUB has definitely taken some notes from these bands and added some hard dark elements along with serious "rock" riffage. Some songs have an early '80s LA sound to them while others are sharper edged and shadowed. "Rather be Blind," the title track, is really good. The overall production value on this demo is high. Pro printed cassette. Two color J card layout. I suggest you check this out. Plus, it comes with a download code! (Jeremy) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, bulkheadrecords@gmail.com)

GHEDE – This noisy duo originally from Florida now resides in Brooklyn and claim to like powerviolence, sludge and black metal—three things I don't like! But okay, objectively speaking, this is an intense effort. All the elements are here: discordant guitars, blood curdling screams and slow-to-fast arrangements commonly demonstrated by the aforementioned styles of extreme music. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, Eric Kiner, #201 338 Johnson Ave, Brooklyn, NY, 11237)

THEE INDOORS / SPITTING IMAGE – A couple garage-y Reno bands split this cassette. THEE INDOORS sound pretty forgettable to me—I don't know if it's the recording or mixing, but it just doesn't offer anything exciting. This

singer sounds like he's in the other room doing his own thing. SPITTING IMAGE is a bit more interesting with some standout guitar lines and rad female vocal hooks. Great choruses! There's even a touch of northwest grunge/alt rock in their sound that makes a few of the tracks, with the proper production, sound like they could be hits! (Matt) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, www.tumblr.com/tagged/thee-indoors)

INFECCIÓN – *Tanto Sexo, Tanta Gonnorea* – This tape has that real raw feeling from early punk. When it was all about having a good time and letting go of yourself and who society told you that you were supposed to be. INFECCIÓN are a melodic and noisy pandemonium of hardcore punk'n'roll. They are super addictive, spastic and invigorating. Would be perfect on a bill with SILLA ELÉCTRICA or LA URSS. (Amelia) (9-song cassette, hand screened J card, no lyrics included, only 200 tapes made, DEMOlish Demo Tape Label, Raleigh, North Carolina)

IRREPARABLES – For fans of the WIPERS, the NIXE, BRILLIANT COLORS and TELEVISION PERSONALITIES—this band has massive appeal. IRREPARABLES has that head bopping, ethereal feel with that lo-fi, analog sound. Boy and girl vocals take turns on songs—no duel vocals here. "Release The Hounds" on the B-side is haunting in the way the WIPERS crawls under your skin. His vocals, with that morbid British accent, accompany the heavy bass, just further driving in that rainy day feel. Lyrics on this cassette are amazing from the anti-religious lyrics of "Spit on The Pope" to the anarcho politics of "Digested System" and the disgust at the British powers that be. Her vocals are sung in Spanish and have that intimidating cool behind them where minimal emotion shows. This tape is everything one wants in a punk tape and a punk band. (Amelia) (10-song demo, lyrics included, fold-out poster, amazing printed layout, recorded in 2011, Alta Intensidaz Tapes/ Teodoro Hernandez, C/ El Campo 4, Las Mercedes 38293, La Laguna, Tenerife, SPAIN. cismapunk@gmail.com)

JUDAS KRUST – *Here Lies Your Gods* – By the numbers D-beat hardcore from Indonesia, but at breakneck speed, à la MOB 47 or CRUDITY. There are a few moments where they inject an unexpected breakdown, but it's mostly predictable. Punks covered in ANTI CIMEX and DISCLOSE patches, take note. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, rauhaturva.blogspot.com)

LANDBRIDGE – Welcome to Tennessee, circa early-'90s... Wait, It's 2012 and this band is from Florida! LANDBRIDGE deliver three powerful songs here, with elements of HHIG-era crust meets the more updated TRAGEDY. Melodic and powerful, these songs are well written with a strong lyrical backbone. This is their first release with plans to have a 7" out early 2013. Highly recommended for the melodic crust lover. A bonus being the packaging of this tape—it's a fold out cardboard case. Really awesome. DIY or die. (Jeremy) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, landbridgerocknroll@gmail.com)

LEFT ASKEW – *Mechanical Fatigue* – Eight songs of pretty mediocre '90s sounding "hardcore punk." Nothing here is really grabbing my attention. I think maybe if the recording was mixed/ mastered a bit better it would feel more composed. These guys are from the Seattle area, so maybe you can check them out live which may be better or get this thing mail order. I'm sure plenty of you readers would be into what's going on here—FFO '90s political punk. (Jeremy)(8-song CD-R, huge lyric book, $5ppd, PO Box 95006, Seattle WA, 98145)

LOST YOUTH – *Rise Up EP* – This reminds me of high school! We had a crop of young bands in the Dallas suburbs that sounded like this. It's not really comparable to anything. It's just snotty, fast, tightly played punk with very clear messages in their lyrics. Here LOST YOUTH sings about shows in kitchens, greedy cokeheads, hating racists and general disdain for apathy across the globe. Anybody remember the band FALLING SICKNESS? It kinda reminds me of that, but a little tamer, and no ska. This is pretty cool. (Matt) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, soundcloud.com/lostyouthottawa)

MORBO – *¡En Vivo! Cassette* – Amazing compilation of this Peruvian punk band. With a vintage analog sound—this tape totally captures the amazing energy of this band. Sounds like a Spanish version of the MAGGOTS mixed with the filth of the DICKS. It's really punk rock. Get this tape, dance around, and sing along. Feel good, snotty punk in its purest form. (Amelia) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, ultrasonido87.blogspot.com)

NERVE DAMÄGE – The anger of '80s anarcho like CONFLICT with the hardcore devastation of NEGATIVE APPROACH. Super lo-fi, low budget, isolated punk. Brownsville is at the Southern-most tip of Texas. I'm sure these punks have gotten their asses beat at least once for being "different." This is real anger, real fury and real punk. Good first demo, keep 'em coming. (Amelia) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, dave.orta@yahoo.com, 1126 Quail Hollow, Brownsville, TX 78520)

THE NUKES – Cool snotty hardcore punk with really awkward, antisocial lyrics. The sound gives a heavy nod to the FU'S, but the tape closes with a BLACK FLAG cover. So I think you know what's going on here. The silly cartoon drawing of a mohawked-punk and a skinhead leaning and sitting on a giant star-spangled bomb and sporting offensive hand gestures is also worth mentioning. Solid. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, Lukas Mukas, 2937 W. Nelson St. Apt 1, Chicago, IL 60618)

PARA-RAIO DA DESGRAÇA – Metallic hardcore thrash from Brazil that's tightly played, shoving convincing messages of discontent down your throat via a burly vocal attack in Portuguese. They exhibit similarities to later POISON IDEA and RATOS DE PORAO. In "Cultura de Rua," or "Street Culture" in English, they surprisingly convince me that many elements of punk fashion, which often strike me as being pointless fads and false indicators at this point, do actually have a purpose: "Army boots combat/to kick the ass of fascists/the look is aggressive/attacking his ideas machos..." Seven seriously brutal offerings. (Matt) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, www.facebook.com/pararaiodadesgraca)

PIG DNA – *Controluuufuucker* – The five blown-out practice room quality recordings on this tape show that PIG DNA can write a memorable punk song while still making quite a racket. Or should it be the other way around? Anyhow, there's a great deal of promise here. I would be interested in hearing something recorded just a little better. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, understanddischarge@gmail.com)

PISSHEADS – PISSHEADS aren't sissy clones recycling FRAMTID riffs. Their sound is the perfection of all the other noisy hardcore punk bands that came before them taken up a notch. Maybe one could say it's a savage punk onslaught with violent drums that deluge the listener with wailing guitar, enough bass to be punk, and an unhinged SIC BOY FEDERATION maniac on vocals? It's not just the accident of a very drunken one night stand between ANTI-CIMEX and the noisiest Japanese band you can think of…this is a lifestyle band. Get in or out. PISSHEAD punk separates the men from the boys. Here are words to live by, "Put your boot through the flowers/Kill hippie, hippie system/Take a carrot and stick it up your ass." Richmond hard punx forever. (Amelia) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, PISSHEAD HQ, 807 West Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23220)

SNIGMORD – Beautiful epic anarcho melodic punk hailing from Denmark and Sweden. From the ashes of the ASSASSINATORS with the beauty and feel of LOST CHEREES. SNIGMORD are super catchy and well done. These guys are guaranteed to do some major touring. Keep an eye out for future releases. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, lyrics included in Danish, Halo of Flies, c/o Cory Von Bohlen, 3444 N. Bremen Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212, haloofflieserecords.com)

VÅLDSAMT MOTSTÅND – Ugh, the first track is over five minutes long. And it's just a couple discordant chords and mid paced drums with some guy yelling monotone. Shit picks up after that, but still it just sounds like crappy metal to me. I don't listen to stuff like this, but I know there are a lot of punks out there that dig it. But sometimes I'm sitting here reviewing stuff like this for a punk mag and thinking, "hmmm, is this even punk?" To each her/his/their own I guess. (Matt) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics, vldsamtmotstnd.bandcamp.com)

VIVISEKTIO – *Systeemin Uhri* – Raging Finnish hardcore from a band that existed during the mid '80s, but seemingly never released anything until a few years ago. This pro printed tape contains their 2008 demo (of songs written in '83-'84) and a solid live set from early 2011. There's a fair amount of USHC creeping into their sound as well. They appear to have a couple 12"s out too, which I'm interested in tracking down after hearing this. (Matt) (14-song cassette, lyrics included, vivisektio83@gmail.com, rauhaturva.blogspot.com)

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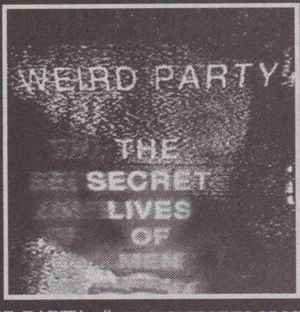

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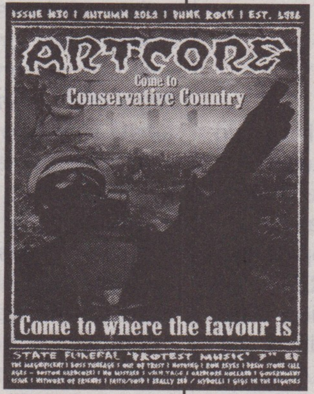
ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(AR) Arlian Amend-All
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booze
(EC) E.Conner
(AE) Amelia Eakins
(FF) Francesca Foglia
(DG) Dan Goetz
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(BG) Bob Goldie
(DJ) Danny Gresham
(SL) Sam Lefebvre
(BL) Brad Lambert
(MM) Marissa Magic
(KM) Kevin Manion
(JM) Jeff Mason
(LA) Lydia Phelps
(CR) Casey Ress

AJATUKSEN VALO #2 / $2 (plus shipping)
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 44 pgs – Finnish
This is the second issue of a notable Finnish zine that focuses largely on the dark region existing somewhere between hardcore punk and dark metal. The layout is stunningly done with clear photos and quality type; the unassuming cover of drab International style architecture (housing tenements, I would imagine) invokes a feeling that could take pages of text to try and describe. And images are what I'm relying on most here as the text is understandably in Finnish. Along with a couple of columns, a few articles on bands (particularly a history of a German metal band called Faithful Breath) and some sort of top 10 of death metal bands from the 2000s, there are interviews with thrash and hardcore bands mostly from Northern Europe such as Human Demise, Hippycrack, Sokea Piste, Armless Children, Condor, Jorma Ollila and Nikolai Blad (who seems to be a folk singer of sorts). Obviously a work of passion and sincerity, *Ajatuksen Valo* definitely seems worthy of your perusal…if you speak Finnish of course! (BG)
www.jpar.blogspot.com



ARTCORE #30 / £4.50 w/free 7"
8.5 x 11 – printed – 38 pgs
Long running UK music fanzine. This one features a State Children 7", which is reviewed in the music section I assume? *Artcore* features interviews with the Magnificent, Boss Tuneage Records, Ron Reyes, Out of Trust, Nothing and the Faith and the Void (!!) plus pieces on Government Issue, '80s Dutch punk, '80s Texas punk, the All Ages movie about Boston HC. This will give you at least a week or more of toilet reading! The text is tiny and there is so much crammed in. Emphasis on older punk culture this time, but Welly complains about flaky bands in his intro, so maybe the younger generation flaked this issue. At any rate, well worth sending off for. Welly has a dark/glass half empty view of the world and it results in a great zine. (LG)
www.artcorefanzine.co.uk

ATTACK OF THE ZOMBIE SOY BOT #12 / $4
8.5 x 11 – copied – 60 pgs
There's almost something charming in the amateurism of this comic. The drawings are simple and well-meaning, and the handwritten scrawl reminds me of a high schooler's mash note. I found it hard to suffer through more than a few pages, however. I may give Tom more of a pass if he were merely a wide-eyed youth, but on the cusp of 30, I expect a bit more insight (and, well, punctuation), even for a zine intended to be light and fun. Instead, we learn not to underestimate slackers, why monogamy's awesome (just like Chinese food), and that Goldenberg's peanut chews are vegan (c'mon, I knew that back in 1992)—sadly, I'm left thinking "I'm never going to get those ten minutes back." (FF)
zombiesoybot@hotmail.com /
www.zombiesoybot.com

BLOODY WAYS #1, #2 / $3 plus shipping, trades and wholesale OK
8.5 x 7 – copied – 20 pgs
Cut and paste style zine with classic gig fliers and high contrasted black and white pictures leave no page blank. The formats for both zines are short concise interviews that are filled with informative no BS answers. Issue one includes interviews with Crossed Out, Junk Schizo and a concise yet excellent gig report on Wretched reprinted from *Raising Hell* #7. Issue number two is a little longer, kicking things off with an interview with Italian HC band Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers. An excellent interview with Germany's Vorkriegsphase who were known for their chainsaw sound. Interviews with Wrangler Brutes and Vile Gash round out the last half of the zine. (DJ)
laughingwomb@gmail.com

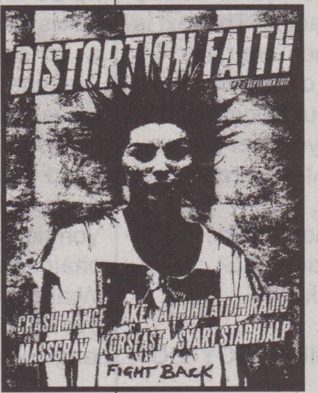
DISTORTION FAITH #2 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 22 pgs
I feel like this zine has a lot more potential than it lived up to for this issue, which makes me sound more like I'm grading a paper than writing a review, but I'm not sure how else to put it. The interviews with Crash Mange and Svart Städhjälp seem more praise-heavy and promotional than anything else. The interview with a punk that just turned fifty could've been a lot more interesting, but seems more surface level than anything, though the interview with someone behind Annihilation Radio is a bit more investigative and interesting. Nothing here was left to a copy machine, and the layout is mixed, sometimes with cool graphics and artwork, other times with entirely too much going on, but it at least steers clear of being too professional. (DG)
distortionfaith@gmail.com

GENERAL SPEECH OMNIBUS #1 / $6
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 28 pgs.
This handy back pocket-sized volume collects the bulk of issues one through four of this newish zine that is printed out of Lexington, Kentucky, but covers a globe-spanning range of classic and modern hardcore punk. This zine has always had a highlight in the editor's introductions, which are heartfelt and insightful pieces on topics ranging from

zine culture to the local punk scene and the obsessive demo/record collector life. All of the intros are compiled here, along with every interview from these issues, which are good if sometimes short charts with the likes of Inservibles (best interview of the contemporary bands), (my perennial favorites) Death Dust Extractor, No Fucker, Teargas, Bellicose Minds and more. Special mention must be given to three featured pieces: the incredibly in-depth interview with Insane Johnny of Swiss mega-obscurities the Decay, which is a fascinating look into the early Swiss punk scene and the tumultuous career of one of the least-heard early hardcore bands, the tasty four page photo spread of rare Death Side photos (that hair!) and the back page piece on the legendary Gai/Swankys noise cat. Who knew they ended up turning down the noize after '85 in an effort to spare their poor kitty's eardrums? While the original record and demo reviews are excised, there are new photos scattered throughout of classic Japanese hardcore bands. If you're into the raw-er, more obscure side of the international hardcore scene and especially Japanese stuff you should have been reading this already, but if you haven't here's your chance to pick up the best of the first four issues which will surely leave you salivating for #5. (AU)
PO Box 24842 / Lexington, KY 40524 / generalspeech@gmail.com

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS #1, #2 / $5 ppd US, $7 world
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 46 pgs, 34 pgs
This is a new zine, made by an ex-blogger who phased out blogging to focus on his Master's thesis. It's got a glossy, full color cover, on thick paper, with a minimal layout design within. While I find the layout aesthetic a little plain, I totally understand the original difficulties first-time zine makers need to overcome; such as realizing you need to keep paging, borders and font size in mind, or having to come up with single filler pages (here, I believe, courtesy of the writers cat, Tacocat?). Issue one features, among other things: interviews with Astro Girl records and Wet Nurce, a piece on "How I Survived Horrible Fest 7," a photo feature from this year's Maryland Death fest, seven inch and LP reviews. Issue two follows a similar pattern and features, among other things: interviews with Goldmines, the Hussy and Guantanamo Baywatch, the ladies from Coathangers do their own Rad Libs, plus seven inch and LP reviews. If you like finding out about up-coming indie punk and garage rock bands from the US, you might enjoy this. (LA)
robert.a.moore1982@gmail.com

KING-CAT #73 / $4
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Largely unchanged since the first time I ran across it over a decade ago, *King-Cat* remains a collection of quiet comics of daily themes. The focus of this issue is birds and rodents and John's quest to one day see a cuckoo. I'm not sure that I would ordinarily go out of my way to search out a zine like this one, but familiarity has made it something like an old friend that drops by for a visit with whom you may not have much in common, but has a way of bringing a little levity to life. (CR)
PO Box 142 / South Beloit, IL 61080 / www.king-cat.net



LOTS OF ROT #2 / $?
8.5 x 5 – copied – 52 pgs
I'm a sucker for three things in this world: Dick Lucas, Food and Los Angeles. And congratulations LOR zine you've covered them all. But this little zine isn't all fun and games, it also covers serious topics such as sexual abuse, and the DREAM Act (Development Relief Education Alien Minors Act). The zine begins with a well-written observation turned Q&A to DIY record label owners about the state of record collecting today. An interview with Kieran the bass player from the Restarts is promptly followed by easy to follow vegan food recipes, which conveniently leads you into a chat with Dick Lucas who also happens to be a veggie. Also tucked inside the zine is a labor of love: a 23-song compilation of mostly local Los Angeles bands. (DJ)
jackasalotofrot@gmail.com

MUCHACHA #3 / $1, trades
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 26 pgs
Tagging itself as a quarterly zine in order to promote feminism, this is a riot grrl style zine featuring reviews, rants and profiles of other feminists. As with many zines of this style, it pushes the personal to the political while also acting as call to arms and as a diary. I always feel conflicted by zines of this ilk because they always seem so mired in nostalgia to me. At the same time, they tend to be a platform for some type of feminist coming of age, which is really cool. It's not exactly bad, and this zine isn't bad, it's just like something that has been done already and beyond that, these things always comes off as worship of a twenty-years-gone scene that, while hugely influential and life/world changing, was still rife with faults. I wish people would talk about how they're going to change the world rather than how riot grrl did. (MM)
www.muchachafanzine.tumblr.com

NIGHT OF THE FANDOM #5 /$?
8.5 x 7 – printed – 68 pgs
I grew up as a purveyor of B-Horror and was no stranger to those now defunct Lower East Side double feature sanctuaries. So, it's refreshing to review this zine as it has that seedy, creepy feel to it of the horror underground. *Night of the Fandom* is filled with themes of horror and morbid curiosity containing art, interviews, poetry, and comics. The art contained in these pages is truly amazing. The vast array of artists portrayed, some in black and white, some printed in color, was very well laid out and chosen in good taste. *Night of the Fandom* contains all different artists with different styles from drawings with immaculate detail, to studs and bullets, to serious Edward Gorey influence, to Gee Vaucher type collage in color. The B-horror comics were a trip, the interview by Mike Hunchback of Unclebob Martin (editor of *Fangoria* magazine from 1979-1986) was a good read, so you ghouls better keep it coming. Issue 6 comes out mid-2013! (AE)
Lovecraft House / 1316 Windsor Edinburg Road / Princeton Jct., NJ 08550 / lovecrafthouse@gmail.com / www.lovecrafthouse.weebly.com

NOTHING MATRESS / $5
8.5 x 5 – printed – 44 pgs
I know this is a comic and I should first be critiquing the artistry, but I have to start with this: Brian Connolly is fucking hilarious. Sorry to quote the worst people in humanity, but this is, "laugh out loud funny." His themes are personal and his humor satirical, but not pretentious. This is punk as fuck without taking itself seriously with the ability to make us all laugh at ourselves and enjoy how ridiculous everyday life is. I love this. We travel

through different stories about Brian's youth, punk shows, parties, popular culture, work, shitty relationships and more. Cartoon-y, "cute" line drawings with shading on off-white paper, which is really easy on the eyes, is the lens in which the author sees the world. Well laid out/drawn stories that will keep you entertained, but also suggest an introspective keen point of view of Brian's understanding of his place here, or at least we get to see how he is working it out. Not only will you enjoy the stories, you will really start to like this guy. I am gonna go read this again… Get it! (MB)
www.nothingmatress.com /
brianconnolly@gmail.com

PEST ZINE #3 / Free
14.25 x 11.25 – newsprint – 16 pgs – Portuguese
I am glad this zine exists because there is nothing like sitting down with a paper and taking the time to read it cover to cover. I can imagine punks sitting outside with beer/coffee or taking the bus and chilling out for a sec to read this. This issue has an interview with Terveet Kadet, an article about the Kronstadt Rebellion in 1921 with accompanying comics of the event (!), an article about fanzines, and more with a few ads that are definitely linking puns with other punks. Nene Altro, who also very generously contributes to our zine, puts this together with much love as you can see with his care for layout, composition and content of this newsprint zine. This is a local punk zine meant to link Sao Paulo punks, but also a great sample of what is happening in Sao Paolo. Punks linked by their own local paper, how fucking rad is that? Does your town have that? Well it should! (MB)
Caixa Postal 111 / Santo Andre SP CEP 09015970 / Brazil /
www.nenealtro.wordpress.com

PRISONER'S DILEMMA #5 / $7 ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 38 pgs
This is not a zine about being in prison! The title refers to the prison we are *all* in regarding our food choices. No matter what we do, whether we are vegan or not, "we are all inmates here." I am vegan, I refuse to support the sugar cane or soy industry, I do not drink soda, I do not indulge in fast food, and I avoid shopping at grocery stores that are not cooperatives or local businesses. Yet, every choice I make I am still displacing local plant and animal species for the harvesting of crops, more often than not supporting exploited workers, contributing to waste and pollution due to run-off or plastic packaging, and so on. I'm sure a lot of us are doing the best we can, but in not harming one group, like domesticated farm animals or supporting farmers who do not perpetuate GMOs, we are still causing environmental harm in other ways. This is a real bummer! Most of us want to look the other way but that is why this zine is so cool as it looks this depressing fact dead on—*Prisoners' Dilemma* doesn't claim to know the answer or say that there is one right way to eat or consume, but takes an educated stab at discussing and investigating our options as educated eaters. This issue contains an interview with Josh Ploeg, whose zine *Fire and Ice*, is no stranger to *MRR*. It also contains an interesting piece by Daniel Couch that takes a closer look at the legacy of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*—from socialism to the disappointment of The Pure Food and Drug Act. There is also an interview with one of the founders of Food Not Bombs, Keith McHenry. If you don't know about Food Not Bombs, it has been thriving for over 30 years and bringing justice through freegan food for all who want a piece. This interview covers a lot of what you never knew or wanted to know about FNB. This statement stood out to me as a good summary of their mission statement, "Hopefully, this issue of *Prisoner's Dilemma* takes a small step in that direction, because the American way of food production needs to be stopped before it spreads any further." (p. 7) (AE)
Prisoners' Dilemma / PO Box 95006 / Seattle, WA 98145-2006 /
prisonersdilemmazine.wordpress.com

RAZORCAKE #70 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 112 pgs
You know, this zine exists, it has for a while. Columns, reviews, interviews. Interviews in this issue include Big Eyes, Wreck of the Zephyr, Lenguas Largas and Jake Austen of Roctober. Enjoy. (MM)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042

ROCKTOBER #50 / $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 144 pgs
It's the twentieth anniversary issue of this epic, amazing zine! It's sort of impossible to review, there are three thousand pages crammed right to the edges with tiny print extolling the virtues of various mutant sounds, crazy geniuses and even Pat fuckin' Boone! What?! Yes, you can counter His Pat Booneness with an insightful, terrifying and mystical interview with Chicago art force ONO, an band formed in 1980 influenced equally by the Stooges, Bobby Womack and a gospel singer who incorporated power drills into her music! That seems like a good summary of what you will find in an average issue of *Rocktober*. Editor Jake Austen is into the sort of things that end of either in dollar bins or at $300 Buy It Now auctions on Ebay, and the vastness of his magazine's scope never fails to amaze and enlighten. The comic strips are great, the articles are written by insane brainiac types who instead of focusing their energy on science, instead threw it wholeheartedly into the gutter! Just send off for this, if you like junk culture, obscure Glam Rock also-rans, if you like to order things from the back of comic books, and your record collection is equally sourced from thrift stores and record stores... Get it or regret it! (LG)
1507 E 53rd St #617 / Chicago, IL 60615
www.rocktober.com /
jake@rocktober.com

SHIT YOUR PANTS AND DO THE DEATH DANCE #3 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 31pgs
A delightfully sloppy cut'n'paste zine from the Bay Area. In between some hilarious pics and collages centered around the title/mantra of the zine, there are some brief record and show reviews, mostly of the garage rock variety. There are interviews with Tony Molina (aka T-Bags) of the world famous Ovens, as well as local thrashers Moderate Excess. Also included is multi-page track-by-track review of the latest Odd Future mixtape, which creator Nick ends up hating, making for a highly entertaining read. One of the better quotes from said review, "It made me depressed to hear the dieing (sic) fetus that is 'new hip-hop' and think about how much gen y sucks nutts (sic)." Good to see there are still young punks with a sense of humor that are stoked on making zines, pick up one of these if you get the chance. (KM)
nickspicks666@blogspot.com /
nickkiniris@comcast.net

SLINGSHOT #111 / $1, trades OK, free for prisoners
11 x 7 – printed – 14 pgs
I love newspaper format. Shame most newspapers are crap and promote political propaganda and corrupt agendas. Not this one. This is what your local newspaper should look like. Handmade cut and paste layout, with thoughtful articles written by critical thinkers, with a color cover, zine reviews and an overall welcoming feel to it. You should also seek out *Slingshot*'s neatly made annual organizers—they rock! Keep up the great work guys! (LA)
3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA 94705

SOUND RECORD #1 / $2
8.5 x 7 – copied – 28 pgs
A sort of sloppy-in-layout but very heartfelt and enjoyable debut zine out of New York, *Sound Record* offers a variety of interesting topics that result in a worthwhile fifteen minutes of life spent reading. For instance, there's an interview with an accordion-playing one man band dude who's into punk and jazz (Walt McClements) and a write-up on some Manhattan skate spots; there's also an engaging article/book review on co-ops and collectives, and why they have so many problems and hardly ever work out. My favorite part of this issue, since I'm interested in urban sociology, is a series of brief interviews with people who have lived in urban places but have since chosen to move to more rural areas. And if this wasn't enough, you also get a review of a public bathroom in Providence and a sort of "What's the Scoop?"-like quick series of interviews asking people to define the phenomenon of "trash talk." Your two bucks could be spent in worse ways. Check out a copy. (BG)
nathanbreakfast@gmail.com

SPARE CHANGE #25: HAIKU & REPLY / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
This is a quirky little zine. The maker jots down his thoughts, ironies and jokes in the spaces made available by free Business Reply Mail cards and postcards. In between these witticisms he types up modern day Haikus. The first one is called "invitation" and reads "there is a whole world and accidents to explore do you want to come." My favorite from the reply postcards is in reply to the International Spiritual Society, where he writes "Hey Nostradamus! I bet you didn't see this coming!" and below is a drawing of a big dick with wings and a halo. I know a lot of people don't like poetry zines (I guess this would be classified as one), but I too am one of those people who reuse as many things as I can. Sure, a zine with confessionary Haikus and prank replies to crappy advertising cards is not everyone's preferred reading, but I'd rather read this while waiting for the dentist than some horrid gossip magazine. (LA)
T.Foote / PO Box 6023 / Chattanooga, TN 37401

MOSH #15 / **THINK SMART ACT BLUR** #5 / RM5 ppd, trade only outside Malaysia
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 68 pgs
Think Smart Act Blur is entirely in Malaysian except for a short section that reviews web comics (and looks like it was designed in '99), and I can't really determine the nature of anything else in the zine given the language barrier, but judging from the layout, the content may very well be nerdy and enthusiastic in a good way. *Mosh* takes up the bulk of this zine's 68 pages, and consists of interviews with Bacteriostatic, Francis Wolf, *DRSA* and *Ride On!* zines, short personal pieces on working at different jobs while in college, a recap of the author's attendance of a Bersih 3.0 rally (from my pedestrian understanding, this is in order to hold "clean" elections in Malaysia, and I wish this zine had given more background on this to those unfamiliar), as well as some zine and record reviews. Most of the interviews suffer from reading like emailed responses to single-line questions that would be a lot more interesting if they were more conversation-like. (DG)
c/o Nizang, TBG 1038 / KM3, Jalan Kapur / 41400 Klang, Selangor, Malaysia, iznan.deviantart.com, iznan79@gmail.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #241 / ?2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
Newest issue of Finland's best-known punk zine. As per usual, this installment is visually fantastic and features a ton of record, zine and show reviews and some great live shots. There's also an oral history of legendary Finnish band Ratsia, an interview with Laahaus, and a tour diary from the melodic punks in Cigarette Crossfire. (KM)
PL 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland

TOOTHWORM #5 / $3?
8.5 x 7 – copied – 28 pgs
This looks really cool—sorta reminds me of the also amazing *ROT* zine, the way the handwriting looks maybe? Just rad raw girl punk destrukkktion?! Waking up on the wrong side of the bed and it's a new universe to get lost in—this is your map, ladies. Trouble will be your lamp light through these darktimes. *Toothworm* is for the mutant girls that sit in their rooms at three in the morning staring at Nik Blinko art until it becomes the way their brains operate. The writing is disgusted, hilarious, personal, but in a fuck you manner rather than a self-indulgent feeeeeeeeelings style. There is an Alabaster Choad interview too! (LG)
E Conner / PO Box 22302 / Oakland, CA 94623 / toofworm@gmail.com

TRUST #155, # 156 / 2.5? or $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 62 pgs each – German
This DIY zine hailing from Northwestern Germany has been kicking out issues almost as long as *MRR* has. With that being said *TRUST* is a reliable source for underground news worldwide. As an artist (like most punks are in one form or another) I always nerd out and love flipping through *TRUST* and looking at the layout of the zine (admittedly even if I can only read the headers!) the organization of their classic layouts with crisp black and white photos, and matte yet slick white paper really make the words stands out on the page. This all makes sense considering the rich history of design, art and printing, in this region which has been overall tied into how the music is represented and distributed as well. These issues include the standard columns, show dates, over two-pages of zine reviews, and pages packed full of record reviews. There are also several lengthy band interviews including the Meat Puppets, Antlerdman, Lagwagon, and an interview with John Stabb from Government Issue. (DJ)
Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany

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uncurbed warvictims

SPLIT 12"

SP-017: Uncurbed / Warvictims split LP: Uncurbed / Warvictims split 12" is now available in the USA. 1 side of early 80's style HC w/ epic Swedish execution versus 1 side of crusty d-beat.
HC / PUNK / D-BEAT / CRUST
Limited to 100 clear blue/black fog, and 400 black vinyl.

NOW DISTRIBUTING:

GANG BUSTER / SENZA TREGUA split CD

Split CD between Antifascist Skins from Penang, MALAYSIA and Palermo, ITALY combine to unleash a brutal bottle breaking SHARP as fuck Oi! assault. 5 tracks from each band that spells singalong drunken trouble for the real enemy! Released by Prohibited Projects (SINGAPORE)

VIVID SEKT — A Deception of Desire 2007-2010 CD

Vivid Sekt (PDX) w/ members of similarly influenced bands, Arctic Flowers and Moral Hex, playing Crass Records influenced peace/anarcho punk. This CD contains 12 tracks of their works from 2007-2010. Released by Crysis Records (MALAYSIA)

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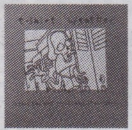
discount horse records

dh records

out now

ace bushy striptease - outside it's cold just like the inside of your body and...
indiepunk from birmingham, uk - 30 mins of chaotic + cheeky pop - archers of loaf meets comet gain
LP



t-shirt weather - is this the end for zombie shakespeare?
durham city power trio, somewhere between 90s bay area pop punk + scottish indie-pop.
CD-R

onsind - mildred, margie, annie, clarice
uk acoustic punk, transparent purple 10" ep, split release with plan it x records
10"

martha - martha
indie punk / power pop from members of fashanu + onsind - for fans of the housemartins, white wires
CD

still available

spoonboy - the papas
the middle ones - slow & steady
the middle ones - it is the rehearsal...
onsind - dissatisfactions

www.discount-horse.com

durham city diy est.07

ABC NO RIO SATURDAY MATINEE

3:00PM

ALL-AGES $7

NO BOOZE
NO DRUGS
NO STUPIDITY

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